A Saber of Light

A Jedi Training Manual (Novice Level)

Jedi School Foundation

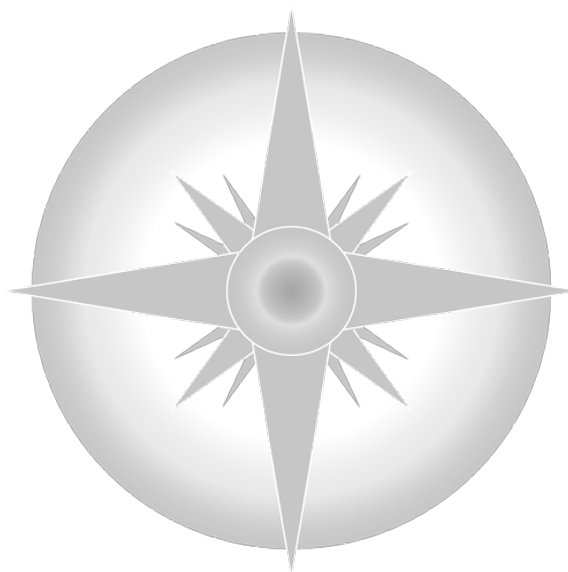

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents iii

Foreword iv

Jedi Training Novice Level 9

Chapter 1: What Jedi Believe 1

Chapter 2: A Brief History of Jediism 29

Chapter 3: Empowerment 39

Chapter 4: Introduction to Practice 53

Chapter 5: Cultivating the Force 65

Appendices 97

Foreword

Welcome to Jedi training! Please read this packet all the way through before attempting any of the meditation exercises.

As you are new to Jedi School, you are being asked to show your dedication to this particular course of training by following the instructions in this book. Practice should take 45 minutes per day (perhaps up to 2 hours, if you have time and are being either extra-diligent or extra-slow in practice). This training is intended to get you started as fast as possible. The pace is fairly intense, but it gets easier in later levels.

At this level, you may not skip a day of practice during the entire training session, or you will be required to repeat the entire thing from the beginning. This makes it very difficult for some people, especially those who do not prioritize Jedi training. This level of training does not include any physical training component. It is suitable for initial training to lack this component, but later versions will require the student to engage in martial arts practice of some kind in order to learn the self-discipline which is required for personal development. The dedication to the training will guarantee the result.

Dedication will tend to yield desirable results.

How Does One Become a Jedi?

Anyone can be a Jedi. There is no requirement for training. Anyone who aspires to live by a set of beliefs and personal standards may be considered a Jedi, with or without initiation. However, without a teacher to explain some of the founding beliefs, it is difficult to become anything other than a warrior-monk.

There are many warrior-monks in existence, from the Shaolin to the First Earth Battalion. But none of these are the Jedi. The Jedi aren't better or worse than these, but instead are merely different.

A Shaolin isn't a Mystic Knight, though both share a monastic dedication to martial self-regimentation and personal mastery as goals. Likewise, there are similarities between all of these and the Jedi, and what differs is the "flavor" of the Jedi when compared to others.

One does not compare iced mint tea to filet of cod because they are simply different and one cannot be said to be better or worse than the other. They do, in fact, complete one another in a very appealing way: thus, the Jedi do not seek to do away with the Shaolin Monk, the First Earth Warrior, the Mystic Knight, or anyone else. Rather, a Jedi seeks to be all that he can be, and leaves the rest to the personal choice of the seeker.

Graduate Requirements

In order to graduation with a Novice Jedi Certification, students must complete the following requirements:

- Reading and understanding this packet
- Be able to recite the Jedi Code by memory
- Explain how to use a mala
- Be able to recite the first mantra by memory
- Explain how to meditate, and what transcendence and enlightenment are
- Explain the different kinds of ESP, and understand the nature of the diaphane

Graduation will authorize the student to study the Force Sensitive level, and to operate as a Novice Jedi.

The Idea of Failure

There is no failure at the Jedi School. There is only completion, or lack of completion. For this level, daily practice is required for the training to be completed in a way which is suitable for advancement to the next stage of training. The student will not only need to be able to recite a few ideas from memory, but will also need to garner insights which can only come from actually doing the work—there is no web site with the "right" answer, because there are no truly "right" answers to begin with. There are answers which are incorrect because they lack the essential insight which comes from practice; but even

these answers are incorrect only because they are nowhere near what occurs when someone practices. We may not know when you practice; but we can certainly tell when you haven't been practicing. This isn't failure; it's merely lack of practice. You are the only one who can decide to complete the training or not. And this is not a failure, it's merely incomplete training. When we are serious about training, we will complete it then. Otherwise, we will learn less.

Likewise, instructors don't fail to teach; they have given the lesson, and if there is any lack of understanding then the student may discover clarification anywhere they want to. Students who decide that they simply don't want to try are also not failures: they have succeeded in discovering something about themselves, and how can learning or discovery be a failure? There are no failures in this training, period.

Money

Training is free. However, donations to the Jedi School as a religious organization are appreciated. These donations allow us to publish materials like the one you are now reading, as well as to expand research and knowledge into new areas. This all helps the training reach more people who need it, and continues to keep the training free of charge. It is also a Jedi belief that what we give out eventually comes back to us in a moment of need: when we do bad things, then bad things come back to us in a moment of need; when we do good things, then

good things come back to us in a moment of need. This is simple causality.

Our intent is not to make anyone feel guilty if they need to prioritize things like food, utility bills, house payments, etc., above spirituality; but instead to let people know that their ability to contribute may impact the ability of everyone in the organization(s) that they contribute to in the Jedi world.

A Note About Pronoun Use

A friend pointed out that all of my neutral pronouns in this work are masculine (except where the person being discussed is actually female). This is not intended to promote masculinity over femininity, nor to exclude anyone who identifies as a female.

Quite the contrary: it was done because women must be respected and revered for whom they are. To use the female pronoun in a neutral sense is to diminish the beauty of all which is feminine—surely, the role of feminine energies is to create life, beauty, softness and sensuality: thus, its use is vulgar and not at all feminine; the masculine, being utilitarian, is neither diminished nor increased by its use as neutral.

The use of the male pronoun as neutral should therefore offend no one, as it protects the beauty and mystery of the feminine from diminution, while giving the male energy that which it seeks most: to be of use.

Jedi Training

Novice Level

Chapter 1: What Jedi Believe

While a real Jedi is not the same as one found in the films any more than a real Shaolin monk can walk through walls, the ideas and philosophies created by George Lucas in his *Star Wars* films form the basis of the Jedi religion.

We owe homage to Dr. Joseph Campbell, whose influence is seen and felt everywhere we turn, and whose assistance in creating the Jedi of the films is certainly evident. We are not the Jedi of the films, but we can think of no better word which summates our beliefs—not to discern or to distinguish or to separate, but to unite us in spirituality.

The Jedi beliefs are found in the films; but there are other beliefs which are also the product of practical reality: they are the timeless wisdoms which come from the past, with the current wisdoms which arise from progress, and the future wisdoms which are to come from whatever source they need to come. For the present, here are the known tenets of the Jedi faith, a faith which we term *Jediism* for the sake of simplicity and understanding of the philosophy which we have adopted for ourselves.

The real-world Jedi believe in the prevalence of wisdom through reason and knowledge.

We believe in directly shaping the experiences of the individual Jedi to strengthen us all as a whole: the whole is often greater than the sum of its parts—this is called *synergy*. As Jedi move together, we create the capacity for combined strength which exceeds the sum of the individual parts.

This interconnectedness which is a core tenet of Jedi belief is also a basic truth of success, and plays into *interdependence*. Interdependence means that symbiosis is occurring: two systems are benefitting from one another's presence.

If only one is benefitting, or benefits more than the other, then the result is called *parasitic*. Codependence is where two systems both depend on the same thing, and both benefit from this same thing. Where there is a lack of dependence, the relationship fails—the shared dependence on drugs or alcohol, for example, is a common codependent bond. Where the alcohol or drugs are in short supply, there is less of a sharing, and so the relationship based on the addiction to these substances withers.

A Jedi seeks this symbiosis, and work toward symbiotic relationships which have synergy. These interdependent relationships benefit everything around them. Thus, a Jedi is in favor of things like environmental responsibility and sustainable resources, and opposed to the parasitic idea of siphoning the resources from one area in order to feed another.

However, the opposition in such cases is high because the large supply of these alternative resources makes people money. Ultimately, such power will fail, and so rather than engage in actively fighting these parasitic powerhouses, a Jedi merely promotes the alternatives so that they become practical and suffering is kept to a minimum.

The Expression of Belief

The following beliefs are expressed in no particular order (as each of us has our own priorities):

Jedi Are Committed to the Force

The Force is an energy which is ever-present, flowing through us and around us, connecting all things in the universe. A Jedi learns to commune with the living Force, and to develop a bond which allows a Jedi to be sensitive to changes. This kind of relationship is beyond external analysis, and so a Jedi who is truly in-line with the force is beyond devotion or extremism, and can commune directly with this energy instead of relying on the interpretations of others to guide them.

Correct principles can be taught, truths can be learned, and ideas can be transmitted; but to commune directly with the living Force allows a Jedi to act in a capacity which is above reproach, even if it is unusual or seems harmful in the moment to someone who is not thus enlightened, in order to accomplish the greatest amount of good.

"A Jedi must have the deepest commitment—the most serious mind."

—Master Yoda
Ep. V: "The Empire Strikes Back"

Jedi Are Committed to the Jedi Cause

The Jedi cause is the promotion of life, positive influences, joy, and serenity. It is living as a Jedi, but it is also adhering to the ideals of the Jedi regardless of one's professed religion.

This commitment is lifelong, and the devotion is to the Jedi cause itself, rather than to any individual or group. In committing to an ideal, we each pursue it in our own ways—nobody may dictate whether or not our way is better or worse.

The Jedi Code

Emotion, yet peace.
Ignorance, yet knowledge.
Passion, yet serenity.
Chaos, yet harmony.[1]
Death, yet the Force.

This seemingly conflicting code is elegance, because the seeming contradiction is exactly the way that the Force works. All conflicts are merely boundaries

[1] This line does not appear in the original Jedi Code.

which others have violated, quite often without knowing that any boundary has been crossed.

We seek inner peace and the beauty of all things—compassion for all life; and yet we feel the emotions which are a normal part of existence.

We seek knowledge, yet we acknowledge that it is impossible to know all things at once—we are thus ignorant of something and even if we know it, we can go astray and become ignorant.

We acknowledge the passions of others, and that we often have passionate ideas about things we care about, yet we seek serenity. In serenity, we learn to temper and control our passions, so that they don't rule us.

We seek harmony, which we feel in spite of the chaos which is around us. It is even possible to find harmony amid chaos.

Finally, there is Death of the body, yet in the Force our knowledge and experience live on.

So what about the *other* Jedi Code—the one which quite a few other people choose to use? That one is:

There is no emotion, there is only peace.
There is no ignorance, there is only knowledge.
There is no passion, there is only serenity.
There is no chaos, there is only harmony.
There is no death, there is only the Force.

This seems diametrically opposed to the first one, as well as being contrary to what most people know: we have emotions, and it's well-known that ignoring them is harmful. We are ignorant until we have knowledge—it's impossible to know everything! And so on.

This is a repression of truth, not a mere reinterpretation of it. It serves to lull us into complacency about wording, but the wording itself is very important, because it is the initial (and not the deeper) interpretation which our mind tends to grasp more easily. It is therefore important to discern between these two, if only to help guarantee that we are not teaching a path of denial of truth.

The reality is that there is emotion, ignorance, passion, chaos and death. These things are definitions, and so to deny them is to deny the things which define our ability to perceive.

This expanded version is essentially the same thing in definition as the first version; but a true Jedi seeks simplicity over complex teachings, and so the first version is the only required learning. The second version was composed later as an aid for understanding, but the end result is an added level of complexity which is entirely unnecessary. A Jedi strives to keep everything simple, and reduced to only its basic elements.

Students typically approach both, and are usually required to interpret both. At the Jedi School, we only require an interpretation of the original.

Jedi Are "Warriors of Peace"

The phrase "warriors of peace" seems like an oxymoron at first, until one understands what is intended—and the intent is surely oxymoronic in nature. In a perfectly peaceful society, there is no need for weapons of war or destruction, and everyone lives in harmony. However, so long as any element of society does not permit peaceful resolution, violence remains necessary, even if regrettable.

People who say that violence never solved anything tend to forget the lessons of history, where violence was the only resolution for those who would simply not permit peaceful resolution. Saddam Hussein, Adolf Hitler (and his cohort, Heinrich Himmler), slavery in the United States, Buddhist oppression of the population in Tibet (oppression which is directly counter to many Buddhist teachings)—all of these were ended by violent means.

Violence can and does solve issues, but it has a specific time and place for use. It is when peaceful resolution cannot be attained that violence is appropriate. Even then, it is only the minimum amount of violence necessary to end the conflict which can be thought to be acceptable.

If peaceful resolution has not been attempted, then violent resolution should be opposed. Such violence is always regrettable when it becomes necessary. It causes as much harm to the winner of the conflict as to the loser—more in some ways and less in others.

A Jedi doesn't seek to win or lose, but to end the conflict as quickly as possible. Therefore, a Jedi attains physical fitness just as he learns critical reasoning skills in order to become a tool for the aims of peace, helping to negotiate equitable compromise wherever possible and yet able to deal with violence if it finds him.

There is no shame in compromise; and yet many people seek violence before they consider a compromise which would maintain peace. Such aggression is the cause of wars, conflict, and unreason.

A Jedi sees this, and remains ready to deal with unreason, either by peaceful negotiation (bringing reason) or violence (removing peace). Often, the mere threat of violence is enough to avert the necessity of violence. Because of this, a Jedi is a capable warrior—a tool of violence—in the hopes that peace may be maintained.

The Dalai Lama told a story of two priests who watched a man get ready to kill himself. One stood by passively, knowing that he couldn't change the man's choice. The other knocked the man out. And yet it was the priest who stood idle who was guilty of violent inaction. Violence furthers suffering.

"If men would contend with you, seek not their deaths; but choose your own life."

—Master Kahn
Kung Fu, "The Assassin"

Jedi Have Serene Minds, Strong Intuitions, and Patience

The Jedi's mind is at peace: still, open, and passive. It is therefore able to be aware of things at a level which some might think of as supernatural (it's not really supernatural, or it wouldn't be attainable).

This is not to say that a Jedi is free from emotion; quite the contrary! A Jedi feels things both positive and negative, but maintains composure—control over the baser instincts that the emotions are ruled by. For a Jedi who can be controlled through his emotions is no Jedi.

Rather, a Jedi learns that emotions must be identified and checked, especially strong emotions such as greed and hate. These are not merely chemical reactions in the body (though as chemical reactions go, they have a powerful effect): they are energies which can shape the world. Negative emotions can especially unravel the serenity of the mind—and without serenity in which to retreat, how can we find reason or peace?

This is why a Jedi cultivates composure. Negative and positive are both necessary for understanding; but focusing on negative aspects inhibits the ability to maintain serenity. The role of intent is something of which a Jedi is keenly aware, that too many focus on the negative to the exclusion of the positive.

A Jedi's power dwells in the abilities of logic and analysis, and also in learning to briefly suspend the analytical side—both sides must be learned and re-

fined. A strong intuition which is guided by good principles and sound logic is a powerful tool, and one which is too often overlooked by both religion and science—religion focuses on belief, while science focuses on skepticism. Both are poor substitutes for reason and intuition, even if functionally similar.

Both positive and negative emotions exist; their existence shows that they are necessary for balance. But dwelling on emotions can adversely impact one's intuitive side. A Jedi actively works to purge the overabundance of emotions in order to achieve the serenity which is required for this strong intuition to work—it's all one package, and it's not difficult to become distracted away from serenity by stresses and negativity which exists as a part of normal, everyday life for many people.

To achieve and maintain (once achieved) the stillness of the mind, a Jedi meditates on at least a daily basis—initial guidance in this meditation helps a Jedi to guide themselves at later times to achieve this stillness and serenity. Always, the Master guides and instructs—never forces, except to teach about force. One evidence of this serenity is patience. The patience of a Jedi is sometimes described as "saintly" and is sometimes viewed as a flaw (due to inaction). A Jedi acts in ways and at times which do not always make sense to those who are not Jedi. But so long as the serenity of the mind is maintained and the action is correct and needful, a Jedi's actions in the moment of need are typically above reproach.

We learn such discipline to live more fully, to understand our feelings more completely, and to observe the impact of what we feel on what we think. In patience, serenity, and intuitive insight, we can learn to truly see ourselves from a more objective viewpoint. And in doing so, we understand ourselves and our personal connections to the Force, in addition to learning the power of our own minds.

> *"You will know [if the Force flowing through you is from the Light Side] when you are calm. At peace. Passive."*

—Master Yoda
Ep. V: "The Empire Strikes Back"

Jedi Are Strongly Rooted in the Present

The present is rooted in the past; the future is rooted in the present. To ignore the past is to rob the present; but to dwell on it is to rob the future. To ignore the future is to rob the past of its lessons which are often hard-won; but to dwell on the future is to rob the present moment of action. There are times to plan, and times to deviate from planning. None of these is dwelling on the future.

To ignore the present is to lose touch—and in losing touch with one another, do we not lose touch with ourselves? Always, we must dwell in the moment, without robbing the past or future of their value or importance.

A Jedi lives in the moment, and yet is mindful of both past and future. Living in the present means that we live with a heightened awareness of our situation, always alert to what is needful in the moment.

The tendency toward hyperawareness is a state which can only be attained by learning to exist in the moment. In this way, a Jedi lives a low-stress existence in which extended awareness of one's surroundings is the normal state.

It is a duty for all Jedi to live for the moment by gauging past trends and planning future activities, and in doing these glide effortlessly through the time and place where desirable living exists. It is therefore important to focus on what is important now.

Qui-Gon Jinn: *"Keep your concentration here and now, where it belongs."*

Obi-Wan Kenobi: *"But Master Yoda says I should be mindful of the future."*

Qui-Gon Jinn: *"But not at the expense of the moment."*

—Qui-Gon Jinn and Obi-Wan Kenobi
Ep. I: "The Phantom Menace"

Jedi Work to Alleviate Suffering

A Jedi works to empower people so that they are not led into the path of the Dark Side. People who are unable to think for themselves are easily led astray; and strong emotions are a primary method for being

led astray by those who are ruled by their emotions. Those with weak minds as such will always be prey for the strong-minded: this is a natural order. Thus, there must be balance with people who have strong wills. Without balance, suffering is guaranteed.

A Jedi will not willingly take part in anything which promotes unnecessary suffering; but by the same token a certain amount of suffering is normal and healthy, so long as it prevents more suffering later. Allowing a child to burn his hand on the stove once so that he understands the concept that high levels of heat can harm him is a lesson most must learn; placing the child's hand on the stove and intentionally burning it removes the element of choice, and teaches that a person who burned them shouldn't be trusted. In the latter case, the injury is not only the hand which was burned, but the broken trust in the person who has victimized them.

But allowing choices creates the opportunity to learn. Allowing even incorrect choices gives people the opportunity to develop, and a little suffering and struggle mean that development is eventually assured. Everyone must progress at their own pace. Some suffering is inevitable and healthy, however regrettable it may seem in the moment.

A Jedi sees this, and works to help people to come to terms with their emotions, both positive and negative. But fear itself is particularly powerful as a motivator, and unless the fear is justified it is merely a tool for the powerful to use over those with less

power. Suffering needlessly is unjust, and a Jedi must act in the interests of justice.

We learn about the people who have sought to alleviate the suffering of others; and we learn about those who have sought to inflict suffering on some to alleviate the suffering of others; and we learn about those who simply wished to inflict suffering. We learn about suffering, as there is suffering as a condition of existence and the alleviation of it as a balance. In suffering ourselves, we seek to end the suffering we experience, and that of others.

As such, a Jedi aims to be the embodiment of hope for positive changes, and to strengthen the minds of others against control through fear, anger, hatred, and other negative emotions, for these are all the path to suffering—thus, the path to the Dark Side.

> *"Fear is the path to the Dark Side: fear leads to anger; anger leads to hate; hate leads to suffering."*

—Master Yoda
Ep. I: "The Phantom Menace"

Jedi Are Non-Materialistic

A Jedi has only one possession: thought. Materialism is an obsession over possessions, and one which is not the most healthy state of mind. A Jedi seeks to eliminate attachment to objects, and to learn to let go when attachment is perceived.

Though a Jedi's saber is a deeply personal possession—one in which a Jedi invests a significant

amount of personal finance and time—it is merely a *thing,* and can be replaced. The regret of its loss is not over the object itself, nor even the mourning over the loss of attachment; it is the regret of having to once again locate materials to build a new one—time is the one thing which is always against us. If sacrificing one's saber can preserve life, then that's what is done. The loss of the saber for the gain of life is acceptable, in spite of the significant personal investment in the metal.

Attachment to mere objects can lead to fear of its loss. This fear can lead to the Dark Side, and so the Jedi avoid attachments to objects wherever we are able. It is for this reason (among others) that we create a valuable and empowered sword as a part of the training.

In addition to this, it is worthy of note that there are people who don't even realize that they are attached: money, cell phones, laptop computers, and even ecclesiastical clothing are all things which people believe that they cannot live without. Their dependence on these objects is not really life-or-death in most cases: it is merely that they have a fear of loss where such things might be concerned. And attachment is normal: people like to be comfortable, and they like to have comforts of modern technology and familiar traditions. But attachment itself is a hindrance to those who want to walk a spiritual path. It is only in freeing ourselves of such attachments that we truly understand that these things are merely comforts, not the substance of life.

"Train yourself to let go of everything you fear to lose."

—Master Yoda
Ep. III: "Revenge of the Sith"

Jedi Believe in Contentiousless Honor

To contend about who is or is not honorable in their activities does a terrible injustice; the overall acts of a person allow the discerning mind to know whether or not someone can be worthy of the trust which others invest in them.

If people are easily fooled, how can they be trusted? And if they fool themselves, how can they trust anyone? And if they cannot trust or be trusted, how might they be honored?

Oaths may be broken with no loss of honor, if the oath's intent was not honorable. Even if the intent was honorable, someone who attempts to use honor as a bargaining chip to ensure another's cooperation in any matter is acting dishonorably: a Jedi owes this person nothing. But even so, an oath is not lightly given, nor lightly broken. To a Jedi, the word-bond of an oath is a sacred and beautiful thing, and bickering over what is or is not honorable merely cheapens the gift of honor—and for a Jedi, honor is its own reward.

A Jedi does not need to prove honor; rather, a Jedi seeks to live honorably. A Jedi does not seek to create the image of honor, but instead seeks to live in a way which leaves a legacy of peace and reason.

Though it is inevitable that people will have different ideas about how to proceed, there is no need for hostile or negative feelings to preside. In helping others to come to a peaceful compromise, a Jedi lives honorably.

Honor guides and protects a Jedi, because what is honor but the bonding of dignity, honesty, integrity and reliability with the memory of past good deeds?

A Jedi doesn't seek to embody these, but rather to find them in others. Because these principles are valued, the natural tendency is to cultivate them in the self. In seeking, a Jedi will find them in others. In finding these things in others, a Jedi will naturally tend toward embodiment. This is the best way to uphold honor without contention.

Passion; yet serenity. The sense of honor which a Jedi feels is not a means of controlling him, or of creating the opportunity to dishonor. Rather, the dishonor of a Jedi is in the failure to believe in the importance of life, or to accept defeat without cause.

"A man may die from hunger of the body; but whole nations have fallen from hunger of the spirit."

—Master Kahn
Kung Fu, "The Empty Pages of a Dead Book"

Jedi Serve Others

It is a Jedi belief that in serving others, we ultimately serve ourselves. The served are either worthy of such service, or have inherited it. To enrich one's life

through the service of others without understanding the meaning of serving others is to make a virtue of iniquity. No special status can be attained through being served; but rather, in service to others a Jedi distinguishes himself.

In servitude, a Jedi is served; in being served, a Jedi is of service. Are these not merely two sides of the same coin? One can bend in service to another and still be self-serving. Lacking the ability to complain because of a feeling of powerlessness does not deny that something is wrong.

In learning to use a sword, we sometimes use the phrase: "my sword to your service." This is literally a request to serve another individual who is in need of assistance. Because not all battlefields use weapons of metal, is it not appropriate to learn to serve others without a sword as well? The aim of a Jedi is to die while in the service of another. It is not the death which bestows the honor, but the life which came before it. We honor memory of life, and life itself; death should not be sought too hastily.

All living beings are worthy of respect, support, and compassion, simply for the virtue of having survived for as long as they have. We serve others as a reminder that their survival can be linked to our own.

It really is best to go about one's business in a way which is largely self-reliant; but to deny that one needs others, even in service, is to be arrogant and greedy. We all know the pleasure of giving and receiving; is it right that we should deny the joy that others might feel in doing the same?

"The Master has no possessions.
The more he does for others, the happier he is.
The more he gives to others, the wealthier he is."

—Lao Tzu
Tao te Ching

Jedi Focus on Being Positive

A Jedi seeks to be positive, because when we are truly positive (and not merely positive for the sake of positivity), then we discover that we become unstoppable. Failure stops entering the equation—we simply don't consider failure in our goals, because if our actions are correct then failure is not possible. But before we can attain this state of higher motivation, we must be able to deal with the negative feelings which are surely just a part of living.

Negative emotions are necessary for balance, but they should not be used for focus. They should be accepted as the guidance that they are, acknowledged for the emotions that they are, and not ever actually expelled, purged, repressed, or suppressed. To never experience negative emotions is to deny balance, and what result can this have other than insanity?

"Your focus determines your reality."

—Obi-Wan Kenobi
Ep. I, "Phantom Menace"

Jedi Protect & Defend the Helpless, and Empower the Powerless

When a Jedi sees power being used in a way which is unjustified, he tends to feel compelled to step in and stop such power from being wielded. This includes legal powers as well as illegal: for laws are tools of order and justice, and where they do not serve these purposes, they must be opposed by all means possible, even where they have an obvious benefit. The opposition is less suffering than the acceptance.

Those who are victimized by the law cannot benefit from lawful activity. Those who respect the law benefit from the spirit of justice. It simply doesn't work another way. Such benefit should never be one-sided, whether victim or victor, perpetrator or prey. Under the law, a balance must exist, or the helpless will be forever held at the mercy of the powerful, and create the conditions through which social order is undermined. This creates unnecessary suffering, and the conditions for rebellion. Such is intolerable to anyone who has a love of peace.

Therefore, victims should be empowered, and perpetrators of injustice should be prevented. The wording of the law should be imperfect; by creating only broad and vague ideas, people are better able to discern the law's spirit.

Likewise, a Jedi upholds the law where it serves the interests of order and justice, and is mindful of where the law is lacking in this regard. A Jedi will act to create the conditions for peace, and one of these

conditions is a just and orderly legal system which is free from corrupting influences[2]. A Jedi seeks to ensure that the process is fair, that it maintains integrity, and that inequities are brought to light: chaos, yet harmony. A Jedi also seeks to refine a connection to others: compassion is central to the needs of the Jedi, who use this compassion to understand the impact which feeling helpless or powerless has upon others; empathy and sympathy are the means by which a Jedi learns intolerance of justice, and to appreciate the beauty which is in the universe around them.

This alone is justification to prevent the abuse of others. But to defend another from violence, especially someone who is unable to defend themselves—to defend life and justice, and to ensure the freedom to choose living over death—these are where the Jedi's prowess in combat are useful. In any other capacity, a Jedi's combat skills are merely the tool of the powerful, and so this must be avoided. A Jedi is a powerful weapon and must not fall into the wrong hands.

Therefore, a Jedi acts outside of the bounds of secular politics, and does what is right and true. A Jedi does not get embroiled in a war unless the fabric of justice itself is at risk—or unless the Jedi themselves are targets. A Jedi acts not because of orders or directives passed down from others; a Jedi acts because

[2] Note that we don't write "corrupt politicians" here. It is important to understand that there is an enormous difference.

such action preserves life and reduces suffering at the same time. To fail to act, or to increase suffering, or to diminish life—all are things which rob people of the ability to be empowered.

> *"I cannot fight a war for you, Your Highness; only protect you."*

—Qui Gon Jin
Ep. I: "The Phantom Menace"

Jedi Believe in Free Will, Destiny, and Fate

A Jedi works to create the opportunity for freedom of choice. But at the same time, a Jedi believes in predetermined destiny which is controlled by the will of the Force, yet still allowing choice. Where any other-than-reactive choice is made, it can change destiny into fate.

Destiny is the best you can hope to be, of the predefined variables in the universe which dominate your decisions; fate is the ultimate outcome of the interaction between free will and destiny. All things, living and inanimate, have a free will—from the lowliest single-celled organism through the largest known organism on the planet[3], and from subatomic

[3] The largest organism on the Earth is an aspen colony which covers the Uintah Basin in Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming in the United States. By mass, this aspen colony is 600 times that of a blue whale. Though there are other colonies of aspen, this

particles to the universe itself. Sometimes the idea of destiny seems counter to the idea of free will.

But both are working at the same time, in different ways and on different aspects of reality. In understanding how these things interact, a Jedi learns to shape the world around them, often seeming to be able to change the world at will (and from a certain perspective, this can be viewed as true). This isn't mere luck; it's the result of an altered perception of reality which allows a Jedi to take advantage of conditions which may not be apparent to others.

> *"In my experience, there's no such thing as luck."*

—Obi Wan Kenobi
Ep. IV: "A New Hope"

Jedi Believe in the Overall Positive Effect of Religious Adherence

Throughout history, religions have been used for controlling populations: they produce hatred, intolerance, oppression, discrimination, killing (including mass killings and suicides), and all manner of other causes of suffering against one another. But also in history, religion's effect has overall been positive, when the truths of love, tolerance, freedom, discernment, and life are adhered to.

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one is the largest and perhaps one of the oldest which survives today.

A proper education in secular society is desirable, but no education can be considered well-rounded without understanding the different ethics of the world throughout history, as well as the modern ethical systems whether secular or religious. A mind cannot be free unless one realizes the cost of freedom.

Religion itself is not evil, nor is the organization of any religion into a church; but rather, evil lies in the power struggles and religious politics, where evil will always occur due to the desire for power—this is the Dark Side as well. We therefore don't seek to contend with other religions, nor to even include their beliefs in a universalist concept, but to discern the true and worthy qualities of each belief system which lead us to the crossroads of all truths, each in their own way.

Thus, a Jedi Master achieves status as a Master, and may be clergy, but is considered no more important than any other. While admiration of the achievements the Master has earned is acceptable, using such a title as a means of controlling others can only lead to our collective downfall.

"We are one, yet we are not the same: ten million different things have as many different worlds. Do not see yourself as the center of a universe: wise, and good, and beautiful; seek rather wisdom, goodness and beauty, that you may honor them everywhere."

—Master Kahn
Kung Fu, "Chains"

Jedi Believe in the Dignity of All in Both Life and Death

To a Jedi, all life is sacred. Even with this sacredness, we believe that all life must end at some point. Death is the natural end to life, and must occur, and it should be a process which is dignified. Death does not bring honor; action does.

But this doesn't mean that the death process should be cheapened or undermined. Death should be accomplished with dignity. Just not prematurely. We therefore don't feel the need to advocate vegetarianism or other lifestyle choices which are best left up to the individual, even if we see it as beneficial.

It is on this basis that we do not advocate discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender preference, national origin, or other status which may be cause for discrimination—we take exception at Master Yoda's decree that both Anakin and Luke Skywalker were "too old," as it was clear that they were not, once they were trained.

We oppose the inflicting of suffering on anyone for any reason. Such infliction is surely not only undesirable, it leads to the Dark Side—taking joy in the suffering of others. To a Jedi, this is simply intolerable.

We oppose torture and degradation used as forms of interrogation. These result not in the truth, but in telling someone the fastest lie to end the discomfort. This is simple historical fact.

Removing dignity is intolerable, even toward a prisoner. The lowest scum is still living, and deserving

of respect. That they harm others without thought is merely a product of education which they have or have not received.

We oppose capital punishment, as it removes the dignity of the individual for the entertainment or revenge of others—and no punishment should be used as entertainment, particularly in criminal cases; nor should revenge be a substitute for the just recompense of any criminal. Criminals should be permitted to be productive members of society; in this, they work toward the goal of societal integration. Integration into society means an end to antisocial behavior, rather than a furtherance of it.

We oppose the use of cruel punishments, and unusual means of punishment—such are degrading to the individual, and do not serve to create an orderly society. We separate the two terms separately because the term "cruel and unusual" has been thought to be a singular. A Jedi is opposed to both parts, whether together or separate.

The Jedi believe in criminal rehabilitation, and are opposed to warehousing criminals on that basis. Extending this belief even further, we oppose the use of death as a penalty for any crime, no matter how egregious or distasteful.

A Jedi does not seek to separate sentient beings by class, "race," status, or anything else. Neither do we accept that these things are pointless. A Jedi cannot tolerate these things, because they detract from good order and respectful interaction. They inhibit conditions for inner peace. And they create conditions

which make such order more difficult to enforce. The lessons they teach are not the lessons of order and peace; they are the lessons of aversion and violence. These detract from the order of society, rather than upholding it.

> *"[Qui-Gon] has learned the path to immortality. One who has returned from the netherworld of the Force… How to commune with him, I will teach you."*
>
> *—Master Yoda*
> *Ep. III: "The Rise of the Sith"*

14 Points

It is a Jedi belief that we don't always know truth until we hear it. It takes understanding that there is truth, and that there is untruth, before we appreciate that there is a difference.

Here is a summary of the 14 points of Jediism:

- Jedi are committed to the Force
- Jedi are committed to the Jedi Cause
- Jedi are "Warriors of Peace"
- Jedi have serene minds, strong intuitions, and patience
- Jedi are strongly rooted in the present
- Jedi work to alleviate suffering
- Jedi are non-materialistic
- Jedi believe in honor without contention
- Jedi serve others

- Jedi focus on being positive
- Jedi protect and defend the helpless, and empower the powerless.
- Jedi believe in free will, destiny, and fate
- Jedi believe in the overall positive effect of religious adherence
- Jedi believe in the dignity of all in both life and death

This was not created by Jedi School, but instead appears to be a consensus among the Jedi groups.

Chapter 2: A Brief History of Jediism

The word *Jedi* is actually found in Hebrew, and is a male name that means "beloved by God". The word was used in an Americanized fashion for the film in the 1970s, so that George Lucas could keep it accessible to the public.

There are claims that the word comes from the Japanese *jieitai,* and from the Chinese *jo dai,* but these ideas seem to lack fundamental links to George Lucas or his creative process. Mr. Lucas is fairly tight-lipped about the actual origin.

The Force and George Lucas

George Lucas saw an abstract film produced in 1963 called *21-87,* which was a debate between Warren S. McCulloch (an artificial intelligence pioneer) and Roman Kroiter (later developer of IMAX).

Figure 1: George Lucas

As McCulloch argues that human beings are nothing more than highly complex machines,

Kroiter responded with:

> *"Many people feel that in the contemplation of nature and in communication with other living things, they become aware of some kind of force, or something, behind this apparent mask which we see in front of us, and they call it God."*

This was confirmed by George Lucas in a 2005 *Wired* magazine interview that his use of "the Force" was an echo of that phrase, but that the idea behind it was more universal. Said Lucas:

> *"Similar phrases have been used extensively by many different people for the last 13,000 years to describe the 'life force'."*

The idea of the Force is something that has existed without time for much of human history. We do believe that the idea behind the fiction, which is based in human history, is sound.

Dr. Joseph Campbell

Joseph Campbell's influence on George Lucas was nothing short of profound. As a friend, mentor, teacher, and co-creator of the Jedi Order for the films (with Mr. Lucas), Dr. Campbell was highly influential in assuring that a link to the history of human folklore was kept very much alive. When asked, Dr. Campbell said that the Jedi in *Star Wars* were

Figure 2: Dr. Joseph Campbell

based on every hero throughout the bulk of human expression—every great hero underwent the trials that Luke Skywalker went through, and each of us in turn can live heroically.

Campbell also said that religion was a defense mechanism for having a spiritual experience. People are discomforted by spirituality because it denies control over it, and so people create religions so that people can return to feeling secure about the idea that their experience was shared by others.

Shortly before his death in 1986, Joseph had spent something on the order of 60 years studying the world's religions, and was an authority on religion. One of the many things we are left with is the following quote by Dr. Campbell:

> *"Every act has both good and evil results… the best we can do is to 'lean' toward the light."*

As Jedi, our aim is to do exactly this, and no more or less. We embrace the light not as those who would keep it to ourselves, but at those who would defend it from those who seek to prevent its revelation to the world.

Campbell's lessons are some of what we learn and teach, but they are ultimately echoes of someone's interpretations unless we learn and study these things ourselves. That is Campbell's legacy.

Why is Jediism a Religion?

In an interview with Bill Moyer, George Lucas said that he hesitated to call the Force "God," because there were a lot of other things in the universe which might have been much more worthy. In addition, Lucas stated that though his original intent wasn't religious, he did want to awaken a deep spirituality in people—especially in the teen and twenty-something crowd.

Figure 3: The Jedi School Logo

With his creation of the *Star Wars* franchise, Lucas essentially mentored a new kind of spirituality which was true outside of any established religious context. Though we honor this, Lucas is not considered the founder of the Jedi religion, if there could be a central, founding organization. But in founding Jediism as a religious idea, it ultimately created the need to create a religion around the concepts.

Essentially, the only reasons to classify Jediism as a religion are that people do in fact practice the philosophies religiously; and that it helps us to stay on a

level playing field with those who believe that anything which is not specifically offered religious protections under the law is worthy of disdain. It also offers some level of security for those who are just starting out in the religion, so that they don't feel so fearful of declaring that they are Jedi that they never practice, even if they believe in the Jedi ways. The teachings we offer through the Jedi School are fundamentally spiritual in nature, though with a practicality that many other religions simply cannot offer. However, rather than tell people that they have to give up the comfort of their own beliefs, we hold that the Jedi belief is actually an expression of the same truths held in Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, and even Hinduism.

We believe that by expressing truths held by all of the world's religions, we are able to uphold that the truth of the soul is the Truth. We cannot reject religion wholesale because it contains wisdom; yet we can reject the foundations of religious organization because it seeks to pervert this wisdom into a means of controlling others. This state of affairs has been repeating since time immemorial, and we cannot guarantee that the Jedi path will not become similar to these others if we organize as a church.

Therefore, in organizing as a school, we hope to be able to forward and record others' ideas which are then considered in a way which is inclusive into the Truth of the universe, and in this Truth we can then discover the wonder, diversity, and beauty which makes up this universe.

In order to witness such discovery, we must accept that we cannot and will never know everything; and in our humility we accept the novice's ideas as valid. It is in these new ideas that the old and established ideas are challenged. The older the idea, the more difficult it is to challenge.

In a church, we cannot change these ideas because churches tend to try to become the authority on the subject of spirituality; the Jedi School is an authority on nothing other than certification of people who have been taught what is needed for the next level of certification at the time such certification is given (as is the case with any school).

We are a religious organization because religion is so very important to the fabric of society; and we are a school because we both teach and learn. This makes us either a monastery or an ecclesiastical learning institution. As such, our means of conveying what we learn of the truth changes over time, rather than becoming something which stagnates in stodgy books and dogmas which lose meaning over time.

Thus, we are defined as a seminary organization, and our graduates are fully-trained members of a religious order—in other words, free-thinking clergy.

Authority does not convey truth; truth conveys authority. It is important to prevent ourselves from mistaking the source of authority as the source of truth—they are not one or the same.[4]

[4] This is covered in more detail during Padawan training.

The Jedi Path Begins

In May of 1977, the *Star Wars* films opened in theaters across the United States, and their popularity was nearly instantaneous. Lucas had also set up a new concept in merchandising for the films, something that hadn't really been tried on a large scale before. The success of the films places the original film (which is now *Episode IV: A New Hope,* as it fits within the Star Wars timeline) in the top 10 largest-grossing films of all time.

People began to take notice and asked *why* these films were so popular. As early as 1986, the films had generated a following of people from every religion in the world, who held up the Star Wars films as an example of the best principles of their own views. But people were already looking for something new: record numbers of books on witchcraft, voodoo, Buddhism and other new religious belief systems were at record highs, and continued to grow.

The Jedi path began, but it was not official.

The 2001 Jedi Census Debacle

While there is no specific founding of any single organization which can be called a founding organization, the numbers of people in the world continued to steadily grow throughout the 1990's. In 2001, the census brought Jediism into the limelight.

In late 1999, a chain email circulated which endorsed the idea of making the choice of "Jedi" a religious one. By early 2001, there were at least two other versions of this email. In all of them, they extolled the benefits of using the census system to make the religion count, and erroneously claimed that it would cause the government to have to recognize "Jedi" as a religious choice. There is no rule or law about this.

The end result was that the UK's census response rate was the best it had been in a century, and those of the US, Australia, and New Zealand all showed a significant level of interest in the Jedi religion. The problem was that the government could not assess the validity of these claims—were there really almost half a million Jedi in the world? In reality there were likely to be no more than about 20,000 (with some less conservative estimates ranging up to 80,000) in the world who actually practiced the Jedi philosophy in a religious way, according to web traffic statistics and IP address correlation—both ways to measure.

In 2010, the censuses of the USA, UK, Canada and Australia have all removed questions about religion, so that governmental recognition based on census responses is not misconstrued again.

Online Training

Beginning as early as 1991, there were several people who began training in BBS forums, which gave way to online forums and chat rooms, and has continued through 2010 as the primary means of training.

Physical Training

Other than the Jedi School regimen, it is unknown if there are any groups engaging in physical fitness training of any kind.

Physical training begins at the Force Sensitive level. It is recommended that the serious student find a partner to study with, as much of the training focuses on martial arts and the simultaneous building of strength and agility for martial capacity.

Also, now would be a good time to consult a physician about starting an exercise regimen, especially if you have any known health conditions or potential for health issues from rigorous exercise. It's best to know what limitations you may have.

That Jedi "Lean"

Lots of groups in the online world try to make people feel more like Jedi and really don't have comprehensive training available to students who are ready to really develop spiritually. There are a number of ideas that are adopted by these groups, but their application isn't truly unique, and it would be difficult to adopt this as religious.

The Future of Jediism

If we are to listen to ideas about the theory of religion (one of which was forwarded by Rodney Stark and supported by William Sims Bainbridge), then Jediism is fated to die out because of its general ten-

dency to rely on the Force as some kind of magic or magic-like ritualistic concept which doesn't work consistently—after all, most people believe that the Force is simply something invented for a set of science fiction films. But the truth of the matter is that Jediism itself is growing, and there is scientific support (although limited in nature, and begrudging at that) for the existence of the Force. This means that if—and only if—the Force can be cultivated, Jediism will live.

The only thing we can be certain of is that the future is almost never certain. Free will can alter the pathways of the future just as surely as destiny can hold them.

Chapter 3: Empowerment

At Jedi School, we have adopted the use of a *mala* (a string of beads used in Buddhism and Hinduism) to teach the technique of empowering items. In this technique, we learn to focus the energies of a *mantra* (a kind of repetitive chant) to the beads of the mala.

This is good practice for the later construction of the lightsaber, which is not the electronic toy sold for hundreds of dollars and used for play-dueling other Jedi. A real lightsaber is, in fact, an empowered item that the student learns to construct at a later level.

The use of a mala is not absolutely required, but it does make the training more efficient, and will teach you how to empower anything so that it functions above a certain level.

The mala we suggest has 108 or 109 beads, and is made from either plant seeds, wood or bone (though there are some very beautiful malas made of stone, these are not recommended at this stage, but there is no actual restriction in this regard). There are also malas with 21 beads on them which may be worn around the wrist. Both are useful, but we still assume the 108-bead mala with one extra bead (called the "guru bead") and a tassel.

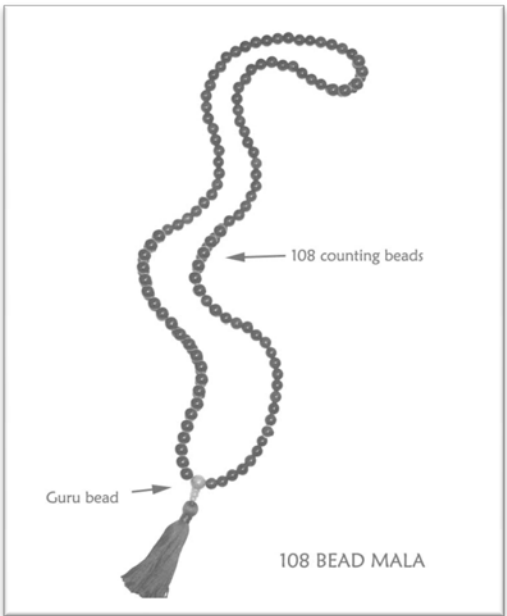


Figure 4: 108-Bead Mala

Using the mala to count recitations will also help to create an empowered item which aids in clearing the mind each time you put it on.

The lack of a mala during recitation of mantras still works just fine for empowering the use of the mantra, but you will want the item to hold a metaphysical charge so that you can learn how empowered items are used.

This also helps the process of memorizing the mantras for advancement in ranks, and helps to reinforce the ideas that these mantras entail.

How to Use a Mala

Figure 5: Holding the Mala for Counting

The mala is held between the thumb and any finger other than the index finger (the index finger decharges the mala, and most people use the middle finger) during the recitation of a mantra. As each mantra is recited, you advance the bead so that you can count. Your mala doesn't increase your personal power, though it can act as a "battery" for later use.

Each time around the mala (108 beads) is called one *japa,* and the process of recitation is called *charging* the mala. Initial charging of a mantra requires one of 4 formulas:

- 9 charges of 108 mantras for 12 days (45 minutes per day)
- 1 charge of 108 mantras for 41 days (5 minutes per day)
- 108 charges of 108 mantras all at once (about 36 hours)
- 1 charge of 108 mantras for 108 days (5 minutes per day)

Each formula has a specific use: the 9x12 formula is for general purpose use where a mantra is needed for use on other people, such as elemental and healing

mantras. The 1x41 formula is used for mantras and prayers which are useful only on the self, such as learning to flow the Force. The massive all-at-once formula is useful if there is a need to charge two items at once (a mala and a lightsaber, for example). The final formula is useful if there are a large number of mantras being charged at once, and allows for multiple charging schemes as well.

In charging an item, you connect yourself to the conscious energy it represents. It brings us closer to the Force. The more intensely you practice, the more you'll charge the energies into your soul. At the novice level, if you miss one day you must start over from scratch. You will learn how to retain energies for longer periods so that you can get more done.

For practice to count, you must charge your mala once per 24-hour rotation of the Earth. It is preferable to do this just before sunrise each day. One day, there was an extra-long day while caring for 3 toddlers and balancing this with the care of a premature child at a hospital and a cancer patient at her home. On this day, the time was 1:00am before walking through the door. The daily recitations were done standing up. But it was completed.

As you recite the mantra using your mala, pay attention to the philosophical concept that the mantra represents.

There may be a temptation to rock your body gently while you recite a mala; this is natural and acceptable. Do what comes naturally, if it's not harmful.

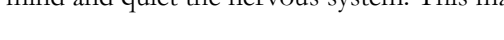
Storing a Mala

Malas should be stored in an area which is sacred to the user. For those who don't have sacred space, it should be kept someplace private.

Other people handling your mala (especially those who don't know what they're doing) can decharge the mala. It's really not a big deal: you just have to charge it again is all. Recharging is accomplished with 1 of each mantra which was fully charged before the mala decharged.

Novice Mantra

Because the Novice Level is intended to be very short, we offer only one mantra to the Novice Jedi: the *Mantra of Peace*. The Mantra of Peace can still the mind and quiet the nervous system. This mantra is:



Anæ sövi, sövi, sövi.
AH-neh sœ-VY sœ-VY sœ-VY
Divine Peace, Peace, Peace.

The word *sövi* somewhat rhymes with *Jedi*.

As you recite this mantra, visualize everything beginning as a sky blue and fading softly into nothing at all, not even visualization. If thoughts drift into your mind, simply let them pass. There is even a possibility that images will come into your mind which didn't originate there. If this happens, allow them to pass too. We'll learn what those are about and what they're for later.

Once you connect to the conscious energy of this mantra, recite this mantra and allow your mind to relax and clear. If your mind is ever feeling overwhelmed with thoughts or feelings, reciting this mantra for five minutes while allowing your mind to relax can help you calm and relax yourself.

It's recommended that you do one mala of the Mantra of Peace before each of your other training practices, except for the techniques where you will fall asleep.

Jedi Names

Many people want a new Jedi Name. These are created using a system which you will learn at the Sensitive level. Until that time, a Jedi Master needs to speak to you in person (or over the phone, or over voice chat, etc.) in order to discern a correct name for you.

Names tend not to conform to the Coruscant Variant (which is popular online and with many other Jedi groups as well), and ours tend to have a very deep meaning which the student is encouraged to meditate upon. Such Jedi names are a construct of the Jedi School, and are considered a reflection of the soul.

People cannot control you by knowing this name, and there's no secrecy involved; but most people consider it personal and so they don't tend to tell everyone.

The reason for having a new name is to understand your Self better (more on this in Meditation, below). It's not a matter of doing away with the old identity—you are always you, no matter what you're called, and you are always changing whether your name changes or not.

It's a matter of understanding your innermost nature, and cultivating that nature as a means of connecting to the Force. When you pay attention to a new name, sometimes the connection comes easier.

But some people see adopting a new name as a way to run away from one's past. In cases where this may actually be true, it's better to keep the name one is given as a reminder that the past is necessary for the future to grow. One does not have the leaves of a tree grow where no root is there to nourish them.

Jedi names are therefore handled on an individual (case-by-case) basis. Even so, there are three kinds of name which a Jedi is given, though one of these requires a student to be in the presence of a Jedi Master so that the true name can be discerned by the Master and related back to the student.

Starform Name

The starform name is a name which the Jedi develops, after a significant amount of work on the starform (which is taught in a later level of training). The starform name is one which can be changed, but it is an expression of the Jedi's true nature, and who they are in their own minds.

Soul Name

A Jedi's soul name is nothing more than a descriptor for the Jedi's soul. It can be as complex or simple as needed. However, it's best if this soul name is expressed in a language other than one which is used for everyday speech.

Saber Name

A Jedi's saber name is a name which is given to a Jedi by the Jedi master responsible for teaching that particular Jedi. The saber name does not change once assigned, and is used for internal identification of individual Jedi in the Jedi's records.

The saber name is the only one of the three which is recorded by the Jedi School in its written records, along with their legal name.

Jedi Robes

Jedi robes are used in a ceremonial capacity, and are typically similar to the movie robes. However, at the Jedi School, we also have a more modern uniform which is used in more of an official capacity. The reason for this adaptation is because the clothing in the films matches non-Jedi clothing.

Ceremonial Robes

Jedi ceremonial robes are similar to those from the films. They are used only for internal ceremonies, and are not considered proper attire for training or secular use.

Secular Uniform Dress

The intent of secular dress is to fit into society in a way which is unobtrusive. In cultivating a uniform look, the idea of organization and identity are promoted. This also allows the Jedi to recognize one another more readily, as we won't know each other on sight.

- **Business Formal Style:** This is a three-piece black suit, over a black button-up (Oxford-style) shirt and a solid black tie. Shoes are dressy black leather shoes with black cotton socks. This is considered the style of choice for all initial interactions. Consider sunglasses a necessity in such cases.
- **Business Casual Style:** This is a black turtleneck over black slacks. Shoes are black leather dress shoes with black socks.
- **Cruisin' Style:** This is a black pair of cargo pants (trousers with cargo pockets on the outside of the leg, fatigue style) with a stylish black shirt over a white or grey tee shirt, and black sneakers with black socks.
- **Mixed Styles:** That's right: mixing and matching is perfectly acceptable!

All members of a group should adopt the same style while in operation together for the purpose of appearing unified and organized. However, if the situation demands more covertness, adopting the style of dress of those in the area may be more advisable than secular uniform dress.

A Jedi should always blend where possible; and where blending is inappropriate, the adoption of a uniform style of secular dress should be maintained: it's better to blend. But blending isn't always possible.

Spiritual Masters

In at least one part of the training, students will have access to one or more spiritual masters. Unlike the films, students are free to select teachings from anyone they wish. Spiritual masters are often the small part of the puzzle of unlocking the true nature of the self which are missing.

But there are many kinds of spiritual masters. An effective spiritual master has years (if not decades) of training to draw from. There are many people who accept someone as a spiritual master who has less than a year of practice, and who lacks true life experience to draw from.

How does one find a spiritual master who truly knows what he (or she, as the case may be) is talking about, where there are so many people calling themselves spiritual masters who have never truly studied what they profess to teach.

Such charlatans are typically con artists, though there have been a few who managed to bring a good deal of truth together—enough that people could feel the nature of that truth coursing through the spiritual masters.

Such masters might include people such as Jesus Christ, Sakyamuni Buddha, Lord Krishna, Melchize-

dek, and others. These people all had a firm understanding of the universe from their own perspectives, and performed great things in their own ways. Modern spiritual masters might not be recognized as being to the same level as any of these people, but are still able to expound on the truth as readily.

The Master Jedi

A Jedi Master isn't someone who controls the Jedi Order. The term *master* in this case is more than just a title. It is a realization of mastery over the self, and mastery of the spirit.

The term *Jedi Master* is something which many organizations seem to hand out to anyone they feel like handing it out to; and in some organizations, there are no titles, because they feel that adding a title is somehow satisfying an ego.

In the latter case, they are quite correct. There is a feeling of ego and satisfaction with a title. But titles are useful when dealing with other organizations, such as government or businesses, or other organizations which focus on ego and separation.

Thus, "Master" isn't so much a level of accomplishment as it is a job title. As such, it implies responsibility and accomplishment at the same time. Those who want to be Jedi Masters are generally not really sure of what it is that they're asking.

By the time you are a Jedi Master, you will understand what being a Master means, and why it's necessary to climb slowly to the position.

So Really, How Do I Become a Jedi Master?

A Jedi Master isn't someone who sits around and debates endlessly about the decisions that need to be made—a Jedi acts! In the films, we see Master Yoda on Tashyyyk with the Wookies, and Master Windu stepping in to arrest Palpatine.

Becoming a Jedi Master requires practice, patience—and above all, time to learn. It's not something that happens in a few days, weeks, or months; the few years it takes for someone to become a Jedi Master is essential to the functionality of the role.

A Jedi Master is someone who has followed the Jedi path to a point at which they have mastered the entire path of spiritual development possible. Learning to be a Jedi Master is difficult and time-consuming. Most Jedi Masters have been in practice as Jedi for a minimum of 5 years, and yet not all have received adequate training. Some Jedi masters have received only a minimal level of philosophical training, and have not yet mastered their identities—and how can we be masters of Jediism without mastering the fundamentals of the universe?

To become a Jedi Master, the following must be learned at a fundamentally personal level:

- How to be an example to others.
- How to be calm and collected when there is a crisis, even when lives are at stake.

- How to be fully aware of the world around them, whether that world is someone else's reality or their own (and what that means).
- How to be patient, and to demonstrate that patience in every waking moment.
- How to be spiritual in every waking moment—whether eating breakfast, walking down the street, or making love to someone.
- How to create the willingness in others to self-motivate.
- How to get people excited about learning the truths of the universe.
- How to give comfort to those who need it.
- How to live a life of servitude to others—a Jedi Master's greatness is in his or her capacity to serve.
- How to sacrifice one's own desires for the good of all living things.

A Jedi Master does all of those things, and more. And it just so happens that these are things Jedi School teaches—you're in luck! But it doesn't really equate to much of anything unless you actually do the one thing that lots of people have trouble doing: putting the thought into action.

We will learn more about how a Master operates in the next level (Force Sensitive) of *A Saber of Light*.

Master Levels

Once you're a master, you don't stop progressing. There are actually a number of levels of master, but

the titles stop changing because to those who are outside of Jediism, there really isn't much of a difference between a high-level master and a new master—the titles are there for reasons of dealing with non-Jedi, or there would be no need or purpose for them to begin with. Titles encourage the ego.

But once you understand how to suspend the ego for a time, the effect a title has on a person is very minimal. Still, one has to admit that being a "master" of something is an attractive idea. The real question is this: what is mastered?

Chapter 4: Introduction to Practice

There are several layers of practice, which all function together to create the entire practice of Jediism. Like all religious ideals, the aim of Jediism is to allow a person to function in a normal life while at the same time living a spiritual existence. Few religions can say that their aims are otherwise; and yet they seem to lack teachings in these regards which would reduce the burden of a secular life.

In learning to practice the Jedi path, there are several things that the Jedi student will need to know. First and foremost, a Jedi needs to understand how events link together in the universal flow of the Force, and how to prevent the suffering of others (and by proxy, the Jedi himself). Without such understanding, a Jedi cannot cultivate a relationship with the Force.

In practice, there are also the acts of prayer, meditation, and ESP which are all necessary to learn the fundamental operation of the universe so that a Jedi can operate effectively. These skills, balanced with critical thinking and a healthy understanding of basic psychology, make the Jedi a force to be reckoned with… if a reckoning is required.

But a Jedi doesn't really want to have to be reckoned with. And in this, the Jedi's education should include concepts of time management, finance, and politics. Though we don't teach these at the novice level, there is nonetheless a fundamental need for these before a Jedi really becomes a Jedi, and so they are taught at the Apprentice level.

The Law of Karma

When we act, there is a reaction in the universe. Unlike Newton's Third Law implies, the reaction is not always equal or opposite, but there is indeed a reaction which results from something else. If we take into account that everything in the known universe is acting and reacting, then some of the reactions which come back to us can indeed seem amplified by virtue of redirection and focus.

If we throw a match onto a pile of wood which is soaked in gasoline, for example, then the reaction of the gasoline to the match certainly seems like more than the effort it takes to strike the match in the first place. If the law of causality is truly universal, and if causality truly exists, and Einstein's idea about matter and energy being interchangeable ($E = mc^2$) is true, then something must have caused this reaction to occur.

Or perhaps we simply have choice, and causality is nothing more than a perception of cause-and-effect where such is only the case for physical matter (violating Einstein's principle as well as a few laws of

conservation of energy—chief among them the idea that energy can be neither created nor destroyed, merely changed). Could this be the case?

If we look at it a little less scientifically, there must have been something that demanded that we use gasoline to destroy the woodpile.

Karma demands that the act be met with a neutral point of view, so that we can see the effects of our own actions:

- Did we start the fire out of anger for something that the pile of wood will kindle into a consuming blaze?
- Did we start it out of a healthy respect for life and a need for heat?
- Did we start it because we wanted comfort?
- Did we begin the destruction out of the joy of watching the beauty of the fire?

In any case, the match is a linking event and carries the conversion of matter to energy (which is an enormous release of energy, in actuality), and causes a chain reaction of the stored energy in the gasoline to kinetic energy and heat (ionized gas is our friend).

There are a variety of reasons for why we started this blaze, and the cause of the karma is the intent behind the fire, and the reactions of others to that intent is also a cause for karma. Good intent brings good karma; evil intent brings evil karma.

There is a story in the Bhagavad-Gita that there was a man who was hurling insults at Lord Krishna, and Lord Krishna's lips began moving after a few mo-

ments. The man inquired as to what Lord Krishna was doing, and the reply was: "Counting!" The man dismissed it and continued to hurl insults at Lord Krishna who, at a certain point, leapt out of his chair and severed the man's head from his body, as he laughed: "You just insulted a god more than one hundred times! I can kill you with no karma!"

Why is this so? Because if you can insult a god more than one hundred times, you can influence those around you to stop believing in him—he loses power. If Lord Krishna was indeed a living god, then he did in fact gain no karma (whether positive or negative) for his action.

Karma is important to understand as a law of causality (cause-and-effect) because when we create an effect with ESP we ultimately enact the law of karma at a very fundamental level: if we do good things with our abilities, then we reap good karma; if we do bad things with them, then we reap bad karma.

The main thing that makes the results good or bad is ultimately whether or not we cause suffering to others. We either create more suffering or we ease suffering—there isn't much of a between, but there is the possibility of both at once, by creating a small amount of suffering to avoid a larger amount (and in general, this brings good karma).

Where ESP is concerned, we must be able to interpret what it is that we're actually referring to, and so in the Jedi belief, we can speak of Karma, but we also speak about the Force. But before we can speak about the Force, we need to learn how to quiet the

mind enough to allow the Force to manifest within so that its effects can manifest without.

Keep it sane & simple: Simplicity is one of the keys to sanity.

What is Meditation?

Meditation has a dictionary definition similar to:

> *Meditation is a holistic discipline by which the practitioner attempts to get beyond the reflexive, "thinking" mind into a deeper state of relaxation or awareness.*

Many teachers in New Age philosophy try to teach meditation with "blanking your mind" to get meditation going—thus, getting your brain to stop working the way it was designed to. The ultimate disservice in this is that your mind doesn't "go blank," and so those who are looking for some kind of validity in their spirituality will go where another technique works for them. Your mind just doesn't work that way: the mind is made to think, so don't begin by trying to stop your mind from working.

Sakyamuni Buddha said that we should not simply sit quietly and try to keep our minds blank; rather, it is truly wise to allow the mind to work in the way it was intended to. Don't try to stop yourself from thinking about anything, because in this you will never succeed.

How to Meditate

The technique historically used in Buddhist, Hindu, and other ancient practices which involve meditation is not to make your mind blank, but to relax your mind. Begin with relaxation, and relax the thought of the sound around you. Allow it to fade into background noise. Then allow your thoughts to fade into background noise in the same way. A thought will pop up here and there. *Be thankful that your mind is working,* and then simply let it go. This probably won't happen your first time, or even the tenth, but you will eventually get to a point where you can experience the "blank mind" effect for yourself. It is the result—the effect—and thus, neither the goal nor the cause of meditation.

In beginning to learn to meditate, it helps if you find a quiet place to sit. Sit down comfortably, breathe a few times, and relax your mind. If you need to, recite the *Mantra of Peace* for a few minutes to help your mind's state of calmness improve.

Pay attention to any sounds around you, if there are any. Be aware of the fact that you are paying attention. Be aware of the fact that you're aware of paying attention. This state is called *self awareness* in Jedi meditations.

Once you get proficient at self awareness, allow the sounds around you to drift into background noise, if there are any. Allow your thoughts to drift away in the same way, just becoming background noise. Your mind will naturally relax and then only occasional thoughts will surface.

These are actually nothing more than evidence that your mind is working, so accept that this will happen and just try to relax your mind even more. Don't push the thoughts away; allow them to drift. Let them become nothing more than a datastream of consciousness, which you are outside.

You are a soul, paying attention to a body's perceptions. Feel your soul: pay attention to your consciousness—your spirit. This part of meditation is not explainable in words—just do it! Try to be what you are, without effort. Pay attention only to what you feel you are.

If your mind starts being too noisy or chatty, go back to chanting the Mantra of Peace, silently to yourself a few times, then go back to being the Inner Self that you have discovered. This is your connection to the Force. Practice this meditation of the Self every day for a few minutes.

Don't make it complicated: just do it and be simple about it. Things that can obscure it include wondering if we're doing it correctly (the process is natural, so it's hard to mess up), or we wonder what we're supposed to be feeling (you feel what you do, and it's just what it is).

When you start thinking along these lines, also think to yourself: *My life is so simple; I am so happy.* It is a gentle cue to preserve simplicity, while confirming that simplicity is a key to happiness.

Next, sit and relax, and defocus. You are yourself, whatever that is. You have no definition. Think only of being—not what you are, who you are, or how

you are. Just sit and exist—just be. If you lose yourself in the moment, and don't know who or what you are, then you're doing exactly what this meditation is intended to accomplish.

As you come back from meditation to normal awareness, you can think to yourself: *My life is so simple; I am so happy.* You can also use something more like the following (to reinforce your training): *My consciousness expands; my mind is pure.* Both of these are positive affirmations which can help you maintain a good mental attitude and which can help choose the thoughts you have.

Transcendence

Occasionally, you might black out or seem to doze off during meditation. This is a natural thing to do. If your body loses tension and you fall over, this means you've fallen asleep. If you stay sitting upright and just lose consciousness of your surroundings for a few moments, you have transcended.

Transcendence is explained in Eastern philosophies as the soul taking over and understanding what the body cannot. It happens with meditation, and there are other situations where it can occur. If you feel yourself drifting into this state, you are encouraged to let go and drift into this state of complete vacuity.

Transcendence can also occur while remaining conscious. This means that all but one of your senses shuts down, and you are in a state of altered perception (you may hear things as if you are listening fra-nother perspective). This is natural and normal. Just

remember: if you fall over, it means you're probably asleep, and not transcending. It's possible to snore while transcending, but not likely.

When you meditate for a few years, transcendence will occur naturally. Usually (after 200 or 300 times transcending—typically years of practice) a time will come when you transcend and will remain conscious of what is happening, and in an expanded state of consciousness. When you return to your normal state of consciousness, you may retain some memory of what occurred during your experience.

When we return from transcending, we can feel a number of things: refreshed, dizzy, disoriented, relaxed, aware, etc., but the key is to keep things positive for as long as possible afterward (so that we energize our soul with Light Side energy and keep our Dark Side temptations to a minimum). The goal is to transcend until you no longer need to, and then to stop. transcendence isn't undesirable, but consciousness is more desirable

Enlightenment

Some people believe that meditation leads to enlightenment (such is the belief in Soto Zen Buddhism). While this can be true, it's not the most efficient means of getting there. Enlightenment is desirable, but is not an end to the journey: rather, it's the point at which someone achieves an understanding and level of elevated perception of the universe.

Enlightenment is usually achieved as a result of experiences which bring realization, but the truth is

that there aren't many uses for enlightenment. Development of the self is without purpose if there is no value. And the fact is, the only place that enlightenment serves us well is in the realm of teaching enlightenment. Or so say the skeptics. So where else might it be useful? Enlightenment is in fact very useful to have, because of the fact that you see and understand things at a level which most people simply don't comprehend. Enlightened people aren't smarter or better than unenlightened; but perceptions of people who achieve some level of enlightenment tend to be far outside the norm and the impact of actions is seen at a much greater level. This is because of the understanding of the causal nature of the universe.

Enlightened people understand and accept karma as the rule of cause-and-effect. People decide that something is good or bad, and so it is. Such judgments can cause suffering. But enlightenment is just the beginning of spiritual development, and is not the ultimate goal of the Jedi. A Jedi seeks knowledge at a level of complete autonomy, rather than stopping at an enlightened state. But enlightenment also has a range of degrees, which we will learn later. The enlightened don't act with the interests of a government, or themselves, or their religious ideals; they act with the benefit of humanity as their focus. They act in a way which alleviates suffering and which allows a causal ripple that helps life flourish.

Enlightenment is therefore a step along the path, and the beginning of being a Jedi. It is achieved by

every Jedi at the level of apprentice (or Padawan, since that word means the same thing). It is required before mastery is achieved. Most of all, enlightenment is the means by which all things are perceived as potentially possible. Whether that's through Christian prayer or a pagan spell, the idea of anything being possible is enlightenment.

While it's okay to use meditation aids (HoloSync®, isochronic tones, or other technologies which aim to provoke meditative states), their use should be avoided during the long weekly meditation in order to train the mind to operate without them. Students who rely on these technologies do not really reap the benefit of meditating beyond having some of the physical effects of deep meditation. The real benefit of learning to achieve the effects on your own is that you learn to slip into the state naturally. The technological tools can help if you're having difficulty, but many people get into such a rush to achieve that they forget that the reason for meditation is to achieve nothing.

And when you achieve nothing and are okay with that, then you can begin to relax and become aware at the same time. It is this state of relaxed awareness that enlightenment tends to begin manifesting.

It's worth taking the time to develop; if you rely on technological means without developing the skill behind the activity, the rush of achievement negates the positive benefits of the act, and so you tend not to reap the rewards of effort.

Duration of Meditations

In meditating, start slowly. You should practice meditation at least 5 minutes per day, before or after any other kind of spiritual training, in addition to one session per week which is 20 minutes or longer. Because spirituality is the aim (and meditation is nothing more than a tool for this spirituality), the connection of soul and body demands that more than just the mechanics of meditation be practiced.

Above all, don't feel that there is a time limitation or a demand. Meditate for as short or as long as you feel you should, so long as you do it regularly.

Choosing Your Thoughts

Because of the way that meditation works, you will learn to influence and choose the direction of your thoughts after a while. This is actually something that we'd like the student to work on, as being able to choose one's own direction helps increase the efficiency of the training.

In addition, there is a point at which you begin to manifest things, and if you have negative thoughts then you begin to manifest negative things. In learning to practice directing one's own thought processes, you will become able to choose the things which will manifest.

- *My consciousness expands; my mind is pure.*
- *My life is so simple; I am so happy.*

Aren't these worth learning to manifest?

Chapter 5: Cultivating the Force

What is the Force? This is the question which seems to plague lots of groups, as they try out different ideas and concepts in order to figure out something that works. The issue is one of demonstrating that *their* version is the correct one, or even the most correct one. With so many definitions, the Force is really difficult to nail down with any degree of reliability or even believability—it's come down to being something that people believe in, without a real definition. In this, it's not unlike the Tao.

About 40 years after the discovery of certain quantum fields, Lynn McTaggart—a journalist with an interest in discovering the secret force of the universe—began to interview scientists about their scientific understanding of this interconnecting trait, and in her book *The Field,* she goes through a long list of scientists, attempting to bring their ideas into lay terms that the average person could understand. At the end of it all, her book brings up several interesting questions and ideas, which culminate in the subtitle of her book: *The Quest for the Secret Force of the Universe.*

But then we have an issue with displaying the Force: can we learn to lift rocks and space fighters off the ground with a simple act of will? Science gives us some ideas which may indeed be the Force in action. While it's not lifting rocks off the ground or spaceships out of a swamp (at least, not yet), the Force is very much present in all living things—but quantum science isn't comfortable with the idea of living things having energy, and so for more than 500 years the idea of life energy was excluded from science.

As quantum theory developed, living things were excluded from having quanta, because the numbers simply didn't make sense. This was largely due to a lack of wanting to deal with transfinite mathematics (math which involves multiple infinities) at a sub-quantum level, and so a key idea was dropped.

So, Really: What Is the Force?

The Force is described rather eloquently by George Lucas (writing as Obi-Wan Kenobi):

> *"The Force is what gives a Jedi his power. It's an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together."*

—Obi-Wan Kenobi
Ep. IV: "A New Hope"

Though vague, it gives us the foundations for understanding just what the Force really is, and what it does. While we might not be able to do all the cool tricks which Luke Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, or

even Darth Vader does, there are some things which an understanding of the Force can bring us, and they are rather remarkable things.

But as to exactly how it works, nobody really knows. We can surmise, theorize, hypothesize, and even philosophize: but the end result is nothing more than an outright guess. But we believe, because many of us are able to have direct experiences with the Force.

It is unseen, and it is an energy, and it is real (we can experience it directly, even if we cannot direct it or measure it with equipment). These things are not debated seriously. Beyond that, we're as hopelessly mired in debate as the scientific community might be about the mass of a quark—and that's a debate which has occurred for decades.

Gravity, EM, and Electricity

The Force is also seen as the affectation of matter in the electromagnetic spectrum. As such, it has scientific validity because it adopts scientifically-valid principles. However, science doesn't accept the Force because not all things within the scope of the Force are measurable.

Physics, it seems, does not completely explain the nature of the material world when it ignores the idea that matter and energy work together, are interchangeable, and rely on acceptable interchangeability.

All energies may change form. It is thus useful to think of matter as a form of energy, and energy as an elevated form of matter.

Psychokinesis

There is little doubt that psychokinesis (the ability to move objects with the mind) is a reality, for those who have committed to any real study on the subject. However, the effect is quite small and tends to be only able to move objects which are a kilogram (about 2 lbs.) at most.

The most famous talent in psychokinesis was Nina Kulagina, a Russian housewife who was under study during the Cold War within the Soviet Union (in what is now Russia). Even with all her talent, all she could manage were small household objects.

There are many people who are able to use these talents in small ways, but as of yet there is no truly effective training program which seems to have broadly repeatable results. It's simply something which can't be explained. Some people do it; others don't. Because of its intermittent nature, most skeptics claim it's all a hoax. After all, if one person can do it, why can't everyone?

However, having first-hand experience with it (and a background in stage magic), a number of magicians are still unable to determine the mechanism for creating the hoax. Those who are able say they are able to do this, of course, deny that they are tricking or defrauding anyone. However, several times there have been people who have been found to be doing just this—skeptics point to this as evidence that *all* claims are fraudulent (a logical fallacy in itself… we'll cover logic and fallacies at the Sensitive Level).

But the most convincing evidence which supports psychokinesis comes from an unlikely source: ghost hunting. Psychokinesis is one of the only ideas which seems to explain poltergeists (ghosts which move objects). The effect has been documented in more than two instances by skeptical scientists, though neither proved nor disproved to be anything.

Skeptics rest on their scientific laurels, but it's only a matter of time before enough evidence mounts to make the ability a scientific fact. And then, perhaps, we'll start seeing people who can use their minds to lift a jet fighter. The real use of psychokinesis can be found in healing work.

Faith Healing

Many practitioners of Reiki and evangelism claim the ability to heal others with a touch (and some don't even need to touch). The fact of the matter is, thousands of people over the past few decades have been healed in a way which medicine cannot explain. In Jediism, the Force is used in many ways to heal others and to bring about a balancing effect to the body. This utilizes the power of the sick person's mind to bring about healing as much as it utilizes the healer's body to conduct the flow of energy.

Within the realm of healing, the Force is literally all of the kinds of healing energies which are in existence. The first healing mantra in the Empowerment section is a soothing mantra for psychological and emotional pain, as well as for things which directly impact the nervous system.

Overcoming Pain and Suffering

The way of the Light Side of the Force is the way of lightness of being. For some, this alone is unbearable, just as dwelling in the Dark Side of the Force is unbearable for others. Both sides must exist: Light and Dark: Ashla and Bogan.

The end to pain and suffering is to find balance within yourself, and to allow yourself to continually choose good over evil. To always choose the Light is not always good, just as to choose the Dark is not always evil. Yin and Yang are both required for balance. Light and Dark are ever-present in the world. Order and Chaos will both reign supreme, as one cannot prevail over the other without losing its meaning for existence. Balance and imbalance are both required for life.

Pain is the expression of resistance to balance. It is living with imbalance which makes us strong; it is living with balance which makes us resilient. To choose strength or resilience is to defy the purpose of either one. To choose pain or joy is to risk losing what you desire.

And yet a choice must always be made. It is necessary to choose, to be chosen, or to have the choice made for you. Living outside of choice, in complete surrender, only hastens death. To choose death is to hasten the suffering of others. Therefore, it is only in choice that suffering may be avoided at all.

Accept that pain is inevitable so long as you are alive. Accept that one's capacity for joy is only matched by

one's capacity for pain. Where there is extreme pain, know that you are showing yourself your own capacity for joy. Accept it, thank yourself for showing your capacity, and move on. Do not focus on pain, and pain will not last. Focus on joy, and it will be everlasting. *Your focus determines your reality.*

Conflict never ends; and so long as there is thought, conflict is the expression of free-thinking individuality. Where conflict exists, reason may prevail. Where no conflict exists there can be no prevalence because reason and unreason live in harmonious balance with one another. So long as you seek the prevalence of good over evil, evil contends with suppression.

Therefore, the Jedi way is to allow all ideas to flow freely, contending only with truth and reason, and never with violence—yet always ready to defend one's right to free expression, and the right to contend, with the balance of Light and Dark within, seeking no contention.

In this way, the Light will always win, for where there is no violence within, peace must reign in the world. Even where violence in the world exists, there is no contention within and so a Jedi may remain in balance. Where Darkness has no resistance, it cannot contend; where evil has no resistance, it must withdraw; where chaos has meaning, it cannot prevail; and where death cannot occur, life must continue.

Therefore, to seek balance by denial is to commit to a life of imbalance; to seek life by denial is to commit to one's own death; to seek serenity by denial is to commit to conflict; and to seek redemption

through silence is to commit to a life of unbearable secrecy. Where there can be no sin, redemption has no place. Where there can be no serenity, conflict cannot find purchase or resistance. Where there can be no life, death has no place. Where there can be no balance, imbalance has no measure.

To live in the moment, to accept that the past makes us who we are without burdening ourselves, to not dream away the present on plans for the future without committing to action to make it so, means to invite good and evil. Ideas which are necessarily good will forever invite evil.

By giving evil no purchase, we learn that evil cannot take hold. We cannot eliminate evil in the world; we can only resist it within ourselves. We cannot rid the world of Darkness; we can only seek to cultivate the Light. We cannot enforce Order in others; we can only seek to rid ourselves of inner Chaos.

We must accept that we are dual in nature, that all of these things exist within us, and make the choices which achieve the highest aims of ourselves. In this way, we create a world which is balanced between Light and Dark, Chaos and Order, good and evil, joy and pain, right and wrong, life and death, and everything else which exists with balance. One side cannot exist without the other. The Jedi could not continue to exist if there was nothing to oppose it. Thus, of what purpose would any opposition be?

This is the true end to suffering and pain: to accept that balance must exist in a natural state, and to seek the natural order of things over the unnatural, to

minimize the benefit of humanity to itself and seek the benefit instead to all living things including humanity. We must seek balance in all things, and imbalance. To find both in the same act is to discover the true nature of the Force.

In such, we must serve the Light Side of the Force, for all things seek the careless and seductive path of destruction by the law of entropy. A Jedi's duty is to be the light which darkness cannot repel. One's intent and actions determine where one stands; the spirit of one's actions and the act of having intent itself are not enough to determine the spirit of one's actions. This is entropy in action. *Entropy* is the law of nature which demands that natural processes of destruction lead to a greater spreading of the matter in the universe, and thus a much greater interconnection between us.

Anomalous Cognition

Like psychokinesis, there is scientific doubt about *anomalous cognition,* but the issue isn't one of simple existence—again: there is ample scientific evidence to support that it does exist. But there are three kinds of anomalous cognition. These three are:

- Telepathy
- Precognition
- Clairvoyance

Telepathy was first measured at a scientific level in monkeys which were found to have sympathetic process occurring in the brain which resulted from simple eye contact. This is the best evidence of tele-

pathy, and shows that there could be a similar capacity in humans. At the very least, there isn't sufficient evidence to disprove telepathy, other than scientific disbelief. There is also not enough evidence to support that telepathy is a solid fact.

Precognition doesn't work the way that it does in Hollywood—that much is certain. What is uncertain is whether or not it exists at all. But what we do know is that it's closely related to clairvoyance. The future is always in motion, and so even if we perceive a possible future perfectly, it is possible that other futures will be chosen in the current trajectory.

Clairvoyance is something of a misnomer, as is the name of the related skill *remote viewing*. In most instances of these talents, the impressions which people have is emotional, or possibly just an idea. It's not an actual image—the idea of a fully-formed image jumping into someone's head has certainly been documented in the (very distant) past, but in general when this happens, it's wrong. Clairvoyance is simply a set of hunches, around which an idea is built. So where do these hunches come from?

Back to McTaggart

An orthodox physicist named Harold Puthoff wondered why some key ideas were dropped from quantum theory, and so—in 1970—began exploratory experimentation into the reasoning behind this. Eventually adopting the phrase "zero point field" to explain the phenomenon he was studying, Puthoff uncovered an underlying interconnection between all

living things, and went on to help in the discovery of a concept called *remote viewing,* which was the term one of his test participants used to refer to the phenomenon—essentially, a teachable clairvoyant skill.

One of the first people who recognized this trait of being interconnected, Puthoff came under fire because his data showed clear evidence of psi. Skeptical scientists accused him of removing portions of the data to inflate the claim (this is a *confirmation bias* in scientific parlance)—but all data was present and accounted for. They accused him of *lacking scientific rigor* (scientific terminology for "lazy about standards")—he was at least as rigorous as any scientist of the day, though perhaps not up to modern standards. They accused him of faking the data—fakery which would have been proved through confirmation studies, not mere accusations.

Scientists who criticized seemed to be lacking in scientific rebuttal, instead hiding behind their skepticism which substituted for reason. These other scientists tend to be discomforted by transfinite faster-than-light mathematics at a quantum level—it implies that the nature of causality is fluid and changeable, which violates the basic idea of fixed causality or destiny (in theory).

Orthodox quantum mechanics rejects the idea of changes to the timeline, in spite of the fact that there is a recognized theory that such an idea would necessarily cause a new timeline to be created, and would not necessarily change the timeline that we find ourselves in.

It is therefore possible (however unlikely) to go back in time and kill one's own parents, and exist in a timeline after such an event without the need for paradox. These and other ideas are wholesale rejected for the simple fact of perceived causal violations, as well as the idea of quanta existing within living things. And in this, Puthoff joined with another scientist, Dr. Russell Targ, and discovered what they termed "a perceptual channel" which seemed to allow information to be transmitted over kilometer distances. And oddly, distance had no bearing on the accuracy of the results.

Ducking criticisms or his work, Puthoff spent 25 years (1970-1995) furthering the research which was initially funded by the Department of Defense, the CIA, and other organizations before being dropped in 1995 for reasons of political controversy[5].

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[5] The issue here is that the report which resulted in the termination of the project claimed that there was a "lack of utility" and used a carefully-selected set of data (called "cherry-picking" by statisticians) which attempted to show that there wasn't an effect. However, the report clearly shows that the effect is both present and remarkable, in spite of the fact that they chose the least-remarkable 2% of the data which was available. In light of this, the only really reasonable conclusion is that it made people uncomfortable to think about a skill which there is no known means of defense against. Therefore, it was politics, and not practicality, which shut down the program. Even the skeptics assigned to the review admitted statistical significance during a quantitative analysis, though most of the data is still classified. The news media was tipped off by "an anonymous source within the CIA" as to the presence of a "psychic spying program." With all of the news attention, a secret like that is bound to be some-

The drop did not happen before developing some early methods of remote viewing, which further demonstrates the interconnected nature of all things, living and inanimate. Puthoff's early terminology for this was to call it a *perceptive channel*. The qualitative result showed positive effects. Other scientists, too, are studying the phenomenon even now, but the problem is one of simple economics: funding for research in this area is scarce.

Dr. Jessica Utts, a professor of statistics, showed that not only were the 25,000 results completely on the level (and inclusive of even the negative results), they showed that there were odds of 20 trillion to 1 against the effect being anything but psychic. Thus, the quantitative result was also positive. In other words, chances were good that science had conclusively proved the existence of ESP as early as 1972.

So why hasn't science heard about it? The simple answer: *because the implications make some well-established scientists uncomfortable* (an ultimately political reason which has little or nothing to do with science). They don't want to exist in the same universe as the wrath of God; and they don't like the idea of someone doing Hollywood-style effects like mental control over someone else, or some criminal acting like Neo in *The Matrix* and stopping bullets as they flew at him. They want a simplified world, one which is

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thing of a difficulty to keep. It is apparent that *someone* at the CIA didn't want the program and stacked the deck against it.

mostly regular in its predictability, and one that modern science can explain to the letter.

Because reality just isn't predictable, that concept is a significant thorn in their sides—but they insist that it is this way because they're established scientists with a career riding on science being able to do what God can't: omniscience. Science can't know everything; but science certainly isn't invalid, either.

But the materialist skepticism which exists in science has held back progress in many areas for well over a century—not because there is nothing to see, but because virtually everyone who has seen something with the onerous label "paranormal" or "supernatural" is considered to be misinterpreting events, mentally ill, in need of scientific skill, lacking in skepticism, or a combination of these. There can be no knowledge without rationality; and skepticism is simply a belief that something *doesn't* exist. It is not a suspension of judgment, which is what is required for true rationality and discovery of the truth of a matter. Simply wishing that something is or isn't so is not rationality.

Paranormal vs. Normal

Like the Jedi Code, which has a seemingly opposite statement which is really the same, the term *paranormal* is one which is applied to anything skeptics deem better-suited to the realm of religious experience.

Ghosts, UFO's, aliens, cryptids (such as bigfoot, chupacabras, the Jersey Devil, etc.), psi (psychic powers of all kinds, all lumped together regardless

of demonstrability or findings), or any number of other items which are considered to be outside of current explanation or experience—either condition is sufficient to warrant the "paranormal" label.

It should be noted by the student that this vague definition could be applied to anything which science doesn't want to investigate and which the average person believes is outside of what these particular scientists consider the normal range of experiences. But science also neatly ignores the definition of "normal" when it suits the purposes of science.

Science has also undertaken to "debunk" many of the so-called "powers" that charlatans often use to get people to believe. But this has ultimately back-fired, since irrational explanations abound and are sometimes forced on people, rather than allowing any portion of the question to remain open.

Calling a large, delta-shaped mass in the sky a "cloud of swamp gas" cannot be considered rational, since clouds are not generally clearly-defined, and when they are they tend not to be delta-shaped (triangular). And besides, swamp gas doesn't move at over 2000 miles per hour (3200 kph), appear on radar, and get correlated by more than a dozen ground-based eye-witnesses[6]. In addition, swamp gas at night glows a faint greenish-yellow color, and sometimes orange or even blue, but it is not described as a pulsating red

[6] This particular event is the most compelling evidence that there are craft, and occurred in January 2008 near Stephenville, Texas; special thanks to MUFON for this data.

light which is "like an arc weld" in brilliance and which flashes at regular intervals as if on a timed circuit.

We can't accept that there are craft in our skies, but we can accept "swamp gas" which moves across the wind at speeds faster than a "drug sniffer" plane from Mexico—or, at least, that's what the official explanation from the US Department of the Air Force's top experts would have us believe.

- If we accept that there are craft in our skies of unknown origin, we don't automatically accept that space aliens are here—the origin is *unknown.*
- Those who accept remote viewing as a form of *trainable anomalous cognition* don't always believe in telepathy, precognition, or even natural clairvoyance (but it helps).
- Accepting that there are ghosts walking around doesn't mean that we necessarily accept that these are the spirits of our dead.
- Accepting the possibility of yeti in Bhutan doesn't mean that we also believe in Bigfoot in the US.

To accept one part of a thing does not mean that other parts must also be accepted. But the end result is that many things which are considered "paranormal" or "supernatural" are actually quite normal and natural; they are merely beyond the scientific experience because of the tendency to ignore the entire nonphysical world because of a lack of "objective"

provability. To say that the subjective experience cannot be real is to deny that consciousness exists.

In such a universe, material reality is a narrow view of only one band of the spectrum. We don't accept that visible light is the only reality; so why should we believe that objective materialism is the only reality?

The Planes of Reality

In the Jedi path, we accept that there are a number of concepts to explain the way that reality interacts, but there is one concept which seems to cover all of the bases: planes of reality.

A *plane* in this context is merely a level of vibration. It is something that occurs simultaneously in the same time and space, but which is merely at a different level of perception than that which occurs around it. For example, the plane of thought occurs at the same time as the plane of physical reality, though the plane of thought isn't necessarily tangible at the immediate moment.

These planes exist in reality, and people have access to them at a fairly innate level. The following diagram should make the idea of how to break these planes down, but keep in mind that they operate in a continuous way, rather than being separate levels.

Things simply are what they are: in a rainbow, there is a continuous change from color to color, rather than a solid point at which things change; yet green is still definitely green, and blue is still definitely blue, according to our perceptions. It's *just that.* There is no judgment of positive or negative.

While these planes are certainly not obvious to everyone, they are useful to conceive of energy work, since energy work's results appear to conform to the model as shown in Figure 8.

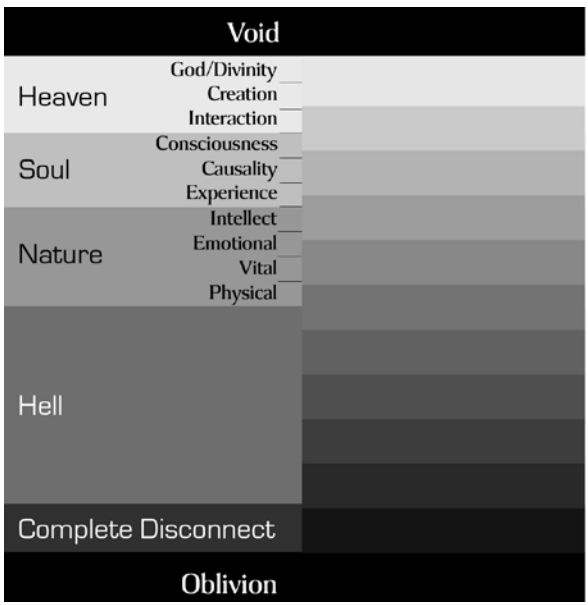


Figure 6: The Planes of Reality

Each category of levels is broken down as shown, and while there are levels of Hell, there is also a complete lack of need to know at the novice level how many levels there are or in what way the levels of Hell function. We can learn this later, when it becomes important for us to know. For now, suffice it to say that there is an overall feel to each category, and each level. And each has a mode of operation, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Explanation of the Planes of Reality

	Level	Concept of Operation
10	God/Divinity	Creator of life
9	Creation	Life which is created
8	Interaction	Separation of soul from soul
7	Consciousness	Realization of polarity
6	Causality	Understanding of action; the Force
5	Experience	Collection of action
4	Intellect	Thought
3	Emotion	Feeling
2	Vitality	Chi; energetic action of physical
1	Physical	Physical existence, separation of personal reality

If we stop to consider that something doesn't come from nothing, and we understand that matter and energy are interchangeable, then we can understand that all matter came from the densification of energy. God is therefore the source of everything: we are ultimately pieces of God. And as pieces of God, we are all one with the creative power of the universe, whatever we happen to call it.

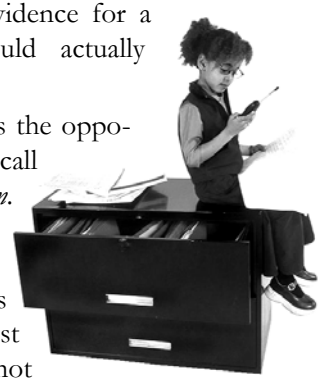
The Cult of "I Don't Know"

What we can accept in all cases is that we simply don't know for sure that these things exist, just as we are unsure that they don't exist. There is not enough evidence either way. But is it really the case that the evidence is unpublished, or is it closer to the truth to

say that it doesn't exist? Skeptics paint a picture of the latter, but what of the former?

File Drawers

In science, an idea called the *file drawer problem* exists, in which many journals don't want to publish results which fail to meet a statistical criterion (the criterion might be a 20-to-1 chance against there being a chance fluctuation—what is called a "fluke" for us normal folks). This becomes a problem when the 1 chance is published and the 20 others that didn't meet it aren't—this shows evidence for a phenomenon where it should actually show none.



In paranormal studies, there is the opposite taking place, which we'll call the *inverse file drawer problem.* This means that negative results are published to disconfirm, but the positive results (ones which show that at least some effect is occurring) are not published. This is largely due to discomfort about paranormal topics, and the continuing attitude that "there's no such thing" as whatever positive results might occur, and so the result is considered flawed (regardless of whatever the data actually shows).

Publication of data which has a lack of rigid scientific adherence to standards which every scientist must follow also tends to lead to a state of *infinite regress,*

which means that the proof has to be proved—one example of this is a statement (published in a parapsychology journal and written by a PhD-level scientist who was arguing against the existence of paranormality): "How do we know that living beings are actually conscious if there's no objective basis for such a claim?"

Such ridicule is the real issue where science is concerned—it's no fun being the new kid. But the real issue is that people continue to allow this combination, which is lethal to any legitimate findings which might occur. This problem faces areas such as remote viewing, psychokinesis, ghost hunting, and even UFO research.

There are significant findings which are scientifically valid, but nobody wants to be the first one to take it seriously. Thus, science cannot accept the real chance that we don't actually know anything until we have something on the order of "undeniable proof."

But there aren't really shortcuts. Science is a process, and though it's guarded with something approaching religious zeal by those who are skeptical, there are ways to build a mountain of evidence which ultimately leads to acceptance. It merely takes time, and then science will either accept it or disprove it—and the evidence is strongly of anyone disproving the existence of an energetic universe.

Zero Points, Slow Science

The idea of the "zero-point field" forwarded by the quantum physicist, Dr. Harold Puthoff, is already

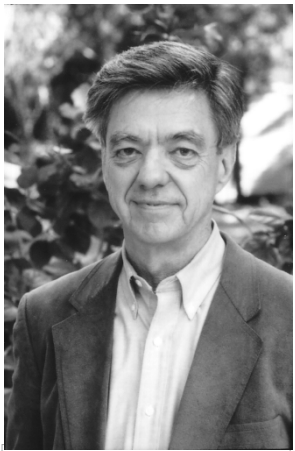


Figure 7: Dr. Harold Puthoff

something which science begrudgingly accepts, and it seems to conform to the idea of the Force quite well. On the other hand, application of the idea to anything meets with something resembling hostility by the scientific community—living things just aren't allowed to exist in a quantum world.

Over the past 10 years this has slightly changed, because there are others who are beginning to realize that there really are applications which the idea might be able to help with—problems which the existence of a zero-point field might solve. Science is therefore just a little slow with regard to facing reality.

Scientists are taught not to be hasty, and so the idea of jumping to conclusions takes on the appearance of a social taboo in scientific circles. By the time someone is ready to run their own actually-scientific experiments, they are so afraid of jumping to any conclusion (thus having their research invalidated) that they fear challenging the status quo. And so they take the position of whatever the consensus is, and ignore any results outside of that consensus.

The only thing required is to repeat a given result—whether true or not. Even in repetition, the contro-

versy surrounding anything which earned the unfortunate (and inaccurate) label "paranormal" means that if you even deign to test something which could possibly prove that something exists, and it happens to have that "paranormal" label on it, you are forever labeled as One-Who-Jumps-To-Conclusions, whether it's a fact or not.

With a label such as this, the general concept is that one has lost scientific validity somehow, though logically it's not clear.

Science doesn't accept the Force, because too much of it smacks of being "paranormal" in nature. But we have comfort in the fact that with enough time, science will come around.

Force Powers

There are people who are advocating the use of skills like remote viewing in order to cultivate a relationship with the Force. But in reality, such exercises (while good at demonstrating a connection) do little to cultivate the connection.

The connection is within us already: we are the best teachers we have. But it requires learning what works, and then building on that. Obtaining feedback is ultimately the way that we find the Force—and this is yet another role which the true Master of the Jedi must perform with any student.

Without feedback, we cannot know if what we have done is correct or not. And even when we do know, the lack of feedback acts as a dampener, inhibiting

any existing connection which we may have been able to build by creating fear, uncertainty and doubt (called by the abbreviation FUD in many online circles, and pronounced very much the way it's spelled: /fŭd/). The role of feedback with regard to *anything* having to do with the Force is considered vital. The way that this works is actually very well-documented in psychology, and is based on three principles:

- The human brain cannot issue its own feedback and remain in a state of good health.
- The mind adopts the ideas and attitudes of those it is around by means of feedback.
- In human psychology, lack of feedback is a sign that something is not real (even if it functions), and so it should be countered and eliminated from consideration.

These are natural human tendencies which really are ingrained at a deep level. We need social order as a species, and anyone who says otherwise is merely dissatisfied with the order which now exists. They are revolutionaries, and group together with others who are dissatisfied. They receive negative feedback, and so they believe that they are opposed by their enemies because theirs is not the predominant ideal. When people learn to work together instead of working apart, real change will be possible. And in working together, positive feedback is necessary to reinforce positive actions.

Therefore, feedback is crucial to development of the Force, and any other ability which might occur.

Simply encouraging something which one doesn't believe in is likewise going to be detrimental: we all require something personal in order to reinforce what we believe. Therefore, it is crucial for the student to maintain active contact with a Jedi Master who can offer this feedback. For this reason, we ask that all students sign up for an online video calling system such as Skype.

Brain vs. Mind

Learning the difference between the brain and the mind is important to learning to do the exercises in this book. The brain is merely the organ inside of your head; the mind includes the memory storage systems throughout the body: your entire nervous system and even a little beyond. When we discuss the layers of the soul in later lessons, this will become more clear, but for now we should accept that the mind is what experiences the universe, while the brain is what interprets that experience in the context of the current human existence. The mind perceives; the brain interprets.

Often, the mind can know things which cannot be put into words. The brain must interpret and understand these in order to express them So that we can accept things without the need for this interpretation, understanding is merely seeing what something is, just as it is, without the need to bias one's self with interpretation if it doesn't help us along. When we know something that's obvious that we can't explain, then we generally accept that the obvious, in that case, isn't necessarily logical.

What is obvious isn't always logical. The reverse is also often true as well. It means that we must accept that logic is fallible and that what is obvious tends to be what is real.

The Diaphane

The *diaphane* is what we normally call our *mind's eye,* but it's a specific part of our mind's eye which is immersive. We can be full within the diaphane, watching as events unfold around us in our imaginations. But it's more than just imagination: it's visualization. It's like being in the middle of a movie, where you can choose to watch, or to interact with. Think of it like a 3D movie screen (there are more dimensions than these three, but we'll go into them at a later stage).

Learning to awaken this within us results in the awakening of our Force powers: visions, clairvoyance, telepathy, and even some parts of psychokinesis begin in the diaphane. We train to use this organ of the mind, and the Force allows us to use it to benefit the world. It is when we are fully aware of the diaphane that we begin to have visions, and to know things it's impossible to know. We begin by creating the concepts needed for basic functionality. We must learn to accept that thoughts and impressions through the diaphane are valid, to a point. Too often, we dismiss it by saying: "It was just my imagination," or "it was only a dream."

We ignore it when we should pay attention, and pay attention when we should ignore it. It is by accepting

everything in the diaphane as valid that we begin to understand which are valid or invalid—practice, and not rejection of our own thoughts.

Let's begin by utilizing a simple symbol, one which we use to signify Ashla (see page 70 for more) at the Jedi School in Figure 9:

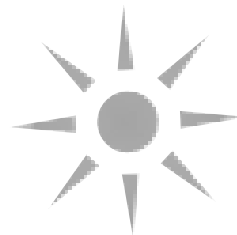


Figure 8: A Simple Sunburst, Signifying Ashla

You may emit the symbol in any color you wish, sending this in a light manner. We relax into it, and allow the Force to be our conveyance—this would be impossible for us as individuals. In sending this thought out into the universe, it's as though we're "making a call" to the universe itself.

The symbol in your mind doesn't need to be perfect, it just needs to be there with the intent of radiating out from every part of your mind. You must want to do it, but you must also relax the body completely. This is why we teach meditation: it helps to put the mind into the perfect state to do this.

After 2 minutes or so of emitting, shut your mind ("hang up"). Listen and look inside. Feel the imagery. Forget about everything and just pay attention to the diaphane—ignore the five senses completely.

Allow your thoughts to come as they will, but don't hang on to them, just as you did during the meditations earlier in this chapter. If you try *not* to think, you are telling your physical brain to stop working. Since it can't do this and maintain your body at the same time, this kind of internal conflict will prevent graduation to the next level. You might have tons of thoughts come out like crazy at first—this is normal. Just relax and allow whatever happens to happen—even if it's nothing. With time (or maybe a little practice, or even some luck), you may begin to perceive information, knowledge, and wisdom. Someone or something might even answer, because it is the nature of Spirit to answer willingly. If this happens, just accept whatever seems right—go with the flow!

At first, you'll want to spend 2 minutes or so emitting and receiving. As you progress, shorten the time that you emit. When you are adept at this skill, you will be doing both at the same time. But after 10-30 minutes of practice, meditate the way you usually do (as taught above). If you have no results after 5 minutes or a day of practice, you're pretty normal. Continue to practice until you get results of some kind. Some people begin to get clear results in as little as a week, but this is more the exception than the rule. Most people take 3-6 weeks to get this far. Even if you get no results, it's still okay to move on to the next exercise. The entire training of the Jedi path can take years to accomplish.

The more difficult it is, the more of a difference it makes to learn it.

Your First Force Flow: Cycling the Heart

To flow the Force your first time, you need to be able to feel the difference between intentional flow and the natural flow. To do this, you should place your dominant hand over your heart. But instead of a flat palm over your heart, cup your hand.

You might feel a gentle warming sensation from the combination of the heat of your hand and your chest. Keep it there for a few moments. About 90% of everyone should feel *something* at this point, before anything has actually been done intentionally. Leave it there for a few moments, just so you can feel the gentle heat. The trick of it is to now visualize energy flowing from your heart area, down your arm, and back into your heart again—don't just imagine it, really see it in your mind's eye, and direct it down your arm. There is a nerve bundle over your heart which we call a *vortex* and which has one of the many kinds of connections to the Force. There are other vortices throughout your body, but the heart vortex is a good place to begin.

As you continue this, you may notice that your hand is growing very much warmer (as well as your body temperature), and very quickly. This is a simple cycling of life energy—what they call *chi* in the martial arts—and as such it is very much the Force interacting with the body. Within 5-10 minutes, you should be breaking a sweat, under typical indoor conditions. Now use the same cupping technique, cup your left

and right hands together. Get the same feeling of heat, and keep it there just long enough to ensure that you understand the difference between the natural body heat pocket which occurs and your intent to cycle the energy, if there is a difference (hint: this is something we want you to comment to an instructor about).

When you are comfortable that your hands aren't going to get much warmer on their own, then visualize the energy going down your right arm, through your hands, up your left arm, and back into the heart area. Where is the heat now, if there is any?

For the final elementary exercise, try this again, but use another person to flow between your hands. Be sure to ask permission first, or it won't work! Also, people who are actively skeptical of what you're doing will also block you from doing it. It's not known why active skepticism blocks it, but that's just the way it is. If we overcome the skepticism with a measurable display (body temperature, participant begins breaking a sweat, etc.), it begins working.

This chi flow is merely a natural part of having a living body, and is a weak demonstration of the Force. If you are cold, you now know how to warm yourself and other people for survival (but do remember that this can increase the stresses on your body). The flow of the Force at its strongest can help with healing, create seemingly miraculous effects, and help with focusing one's attention to laser sharpness.

Finishing Up

In any case, congratulations on completing the required reading! Please begin practice after contacting an instructor about any questions or issues you might have. And do the homework which is found in Appendix A.

Appendices

Appendix A: Homework

Week 1

1) Read the entire packet. Understand the concepts. Write a brief essay (100-500 words, generally ½ page to 2 pages in your favorite word processor) explaining your ideas and reflections on the information provided.
2) Obtain a mala.
3) Meditate as directed in Chapter 4 for at least 5 minutes nightly.

Week 2

1) Explain why it's important to know what the definition of a cult is.
2) Recite 9 malas per day for 12 days of the Mantra of Peace beginning this week. Use the mala to count.
3) Meditate for at least 10 minutes per day.

Week 3

1) Write a brief essay (100-500 words) outlining how the Force relates to ESP.
2) Begin meditating for at least 20 minutes per day.
3) Explain if there was any difference in the level of heat between when you intended to flow and when you simply held your hands in position without intent, with regard to the exercise about flowing the Force.

Week 4

1) Continue meditating for at least 20 minutes per day. Write a short essay (50-200 words) detailing how meditation affects the mind.
2) Write an essay (500-5000 words) which explains the meanings of the Jedi Code in its original form, as well as reasoning out the differences in wording. Include any negative connotations which might result from either.
3) Write an essay of any length which describes your experience so far, and explains your decision about whether or not you believe you can continue.

Optional Homework

1) Construct or purchase a Jedi ceremonial robe and secular attire.
2) Forward an idea about how an empowered weapon might actually be considered a lightsaber without having the same physical attributes as the laser swords of the films.
3) Explain why this section of training is more intense than later versions of the training.

Appendix B: Graduation Review

Graduation review will be done via telephone or email with a Jedi Master. It will consist of a review of all homework and a task which is intended to gauge the student's ability to quiet the mind and focus clearly. Though the training is difficult, the review shouldn't be very hard at all for the student who has completed training with daily diligence for 4 weeks.

If it takes longer than 4 weeks, it's not a sign that anything is wrong; rather, it's a sign that someone is pacing themselves and working to get things right, rather than rushing through to do something for the sake of doing it.

Appendix C: How to Identify a Cult

Generally speaking, a *cult* is a group of religious zealots. In order to ascertain whether or not the Jedi structure you are involved with (including us) is a cult, or even acting cult-like. In essence, the checklist below should be combined with one's own research and matched with common sense.

Checklist of Cult-Like Activity

If more than two or three of these are in practice, you *may* be dealing with a cult; many religious groups have one or two of these and are not cults.

Category	Cults
Censorship	A great number of cults actively censor their members, whether by directly forbidding the discussion of certain topics (and monitoring communications), or by disallowing contact altogether.
Disempowerment	Many cults seek to make individuals powerless against the organization in some way to weed out dissenters.
Dogmatism	Many cults teach that theirs is the only way, and that rigid thinking is a path to spirituality.
Dropout Control	Many cults enact programs that seek to bring back those who drop away from the organization.

Category	Cults
Emphasis	Many cults place a special emphasis on money, property, recruitment, political influence, weaponry, and even access to information. Spirituality is not the top priority.
Hypocrisy	Many cults excuse actions which are against the principles of the group if these actions are done for their benefit (e.g., for political, social, economic, or other gain).
Infallibility	Many cult leaders try to show how correct they are. Cult members are often hostile toward those who are critical, and may seek to hamper validation /verification efforts.
Isolation	Many cults seek to isolate members and actively work to prevent dealings with the "outside world".
Sexuality	Many cults attempt to use sexual activities as a means of manipulation or favoritism. Sexual orientation, choices of partners, and even behavior are often restricted or under the direct influence of leaders.
Wealth	Many cults seek to accumulate wealth and even go to extremes to guarantee that the organization benefits by charging exorbitant fees for spiritual lessons, or demanding all personal assets to be transferred to the organization.

—SOURCE: Isaac Bonewits

This is not to say that there are no other common markers, or that any religion that fits on this list is a cult; rather, it is to educate the reader so that cult-like activity is kept to a minimum.

Appendix D: Other Jedi Organizations

The following organizations are other organizations which may assist the student if they discover that the Jedi School's curriculum is not to their liking:

- **Force College** *(affiliated with Jedi School)*
  http://forcecollege.com/
- **Temple of the Jedi Order**
  http://templeofthejediorder.org/
- **Jedi Enclave at Coalescere**
  http://thejediway.com/
- **The Jedi Church**
  http://www.jedi-church.org/
- **The Church of Jediism**
  http://www.churchofjediism.org/
- **Temple of the Jedi Force**
  http://templeofthejediforce.org/

There are other organizations in the world as well, and they are all worthy of exploration by any student who seeks answers.

Appendix E: Study Material Sources

While Jedi School does have study materials and is grateful for every donation, the following organizations may be of use to the student.

North America

Samadhi Cushions

30 Church Street

Barnet, VT 05821

http://www.samadhicushions.com/

Amazon.com

http://amazon.com/

http://amazon.ca/

We are open to suggestions!

If you own or know about another place to get materials needed, please feel free to send it to us!

info@jedischool.org still works.

Appendix F: Statement of Core Jedi Values

The following statement is based on the beliefs in Chapter 1, but is also based on the expressed values of the Jedi in forums, emails, and on web sites.

- **Prevent Suffering:** The Jedi believe that suffering should be prevented where possible, but generally agree that some suffering is necessary to alleviate the potential for greater suffering.
- **Be Honest:** The Jedi want nothing more than to discover the truths of the universe. As such, the Jedi recognize that speaking falsehoods can impede this search for others; and so a Jedi will strive to be honest in this regard.
- **Serve Others:** The Jedi believe that service to others is important, because there isn't anyone who can do service the way we can.

Appendix G: Frequently Asked Questions

Question: I Want to Be a Jedi, But I Still Believe in Another Religion—Can I Still Join?

Of course! To a Jedi, religious views add to the variety of life which keeps everything fun. Jedi tend to take a positive delight in differences. Rather than trying to homogenize everyone to the same belief, a Jedi sees that everyone has some parts of the truth and so exploration of spirituality is core to the Jedi philosophy.

It is in fact considered a core part of education to experience other religions firsthand, with a focus on the following religious views:

- Atheism (not a religion, but a religious view nonetheless, and worthy of study alongside other religious viewpoints for the sake of the ability to think clearly about the direction of religion)
- Bushido (limited study based on historical documents, within a religious context… actual bushido as it was practiced may have been lost)
- Buddhism (extra focus on Chán, Zen, Mahayana and MahaJrya Buddhism)

- Christianity (Focus on evangelism, Catholicism, Mormonism, and general ideas on Protestantism and Evangelism)
- Confucianism
- Humanism
- Islam (Non-sectarian study—neither Shia, Sunni, Kalam, Kharijite, nor other sects)
- Judaism (especially Cabbala and certain other esoteric teachings)
- Native American Traditional Study (with a focus on some Sioux, Navajo, Hopi, Shoshone and Ojibwa living traditions)
- Nordic Spirituality (called both *Asatru* and *Forn Seð,* depending on location)
- Shamanism (multiple traditions, including some from those already mentioned)
- Shinto
- Sufism (Tariqah and Universal Sufism, in general; but not limiting others)
- Taoism (both folk and formal traditions)
- Wicca
- Zen Buddhism

This is a lot of ground to cover, and for some it takes decades to complete, but a basic understanding of the beliefs of each is required for most Jedi paths. We focus on the things which are similar or the same across all religions, and how belief arrived at these

conclusions. Generally, we hold these similarities as truths.

Jedi are charged with their own education in this right, and may have a difficult time advancing at the Jedi School if their understanding of the above listed religions are not understood at least in passing.

Question: Who Controls the Jedi Order?

There is no individual or group who controls all of Jediism. There is a confederacy of organizations which have formed a loose association, but not even these people control all of Jediism. Why?

The answer is, simply put, that the Jedi religion is not centrally-controlled, but rather operates on a system of principles instead of on strict rules. To lay down strict rules defeats the purpose of learning spirituality. This is perhaps the greatest criticism of Jediism, after the idea that truth can be derived from a fictional work.

Question: Do Jedi Grieve When Someone Dies?

We certainly grieve, but we do not focus on grief. Instead, we accept that it was time for death to occur (this per Master Yoda in *Return of the Jedi*):

> *"Soon will I rest, yes, forever sleep. Earned it I have. Twilight is upon me, soon night must fall."*

Yes, without reservation, all Jedi grieve. We will miss those whose time comes before our own—we sometimes miss friends who live only two doors away, so how can we do anything but miss those whose influence is limited after the deaths of their bodies? Master Yoda said, in *Revenge of the Sith*:

> *"Death is a natural part of life. Rejoice for those around you who transform into the Force. Mourn them do not. Miss them do not. Attachment leads to jealously. The shadow of greed, that is."*

Missing someone implies attachment, but without attachment at some level, how can we retain our compassion—one of the primary qualities which makes us Jedi? This was perhaps Yoda's one and only flaw—the one thing that made Yoda really effective is also the one thing that made Yoda's position weak. He welcomes death, even one which is too soon—yet he himself doesn't take his own life or unnecessarily take the lives of others. Why?

The answer is that Yoda was trying to console someone. He was trying to lessen the pain of someone whose pain he knew all too well. He was being compassionate. But in his compassion, he led Obi-Wan to believe something which ultimately sabotaged Obi-Wan's ability to teach. He built doubt about compassion.

We must retain our emotions, our attachments to people (and never to things), and our relationships—

this is what makes a Jedi truly a force for good, rather than a tool of the Jedi Council.

Passion, yet serenity.

The Jedi Council of today is wise, certainly, and absolutely necessary in order to maintain the Order's vision. But to prepare for the possibility that someday a person with their own agenda entered, the Jedi Council must not assume that its wishes are those of the Order, and that its ideals are always the best for all involved. Rather, it must be willing to relinquish power and allow the truth to be the authority. We must assure that our compassion does not lead to greed or impropriety—these are certainly the trappings of the Dark Side. But we must also assure that we do not lose compassion for others completely, or of what purpose is service but to be killed?

In this, all of the Jedi who would be later killed by Darth Vader were in service to the Order, as this is the only service they could have offered in an overbalanced Force.

Likewise, a Jedi's death is not a noble thing. Nor is it pointless. It merely happens as a function of destiny. Life is fatal in all known cases. Some lives end earlier than others. Death is as inevitable to life as the beating of a heart, the breathing of air, or the capacity for love. It is a Jedi belief that death is not a loss, and that the spirit and soul of a person lives on. We grieve the temporary parting, but we don't mourn death as a loss. It's merely a delay before we will be allowed contact with those we love again.

Death, yet the Force.

Surely, the spirit lives on after the physical body fails. Death is not an end; merely a change. Death is a natural condition where life exists, and is the natural end to life. It is simply something which occurs at a given point in time to those who are living, and under a wide variety of conditions.

We feel the place where someone is missing from our activities, and so grief is inevitable—as surely as if someone we know and care about suddenly has to move to a foreign country. But grief should not be a constant state—it should be allowed to pass as naturally as it comes, rather than dwelled upon. It inhibits the serenity of the mind, and contaminates the feeling of connection. Focusing on grief in the moment is healthy, insomuch as one is dealing with the grief. Grief should be passing, because surely: the connections we have with one another do not end with death. The living need our connections just as much as they ever have, even in death.

Death does no one honor. Life brings honor, and it is one's life which we honor at one's death—especially a good life, filled with good deeds and good friends, and a life filled with beauty and wisdom. Sacrificing one's life for the good of others is a noble deed, even when the sacrifice does not result in death—living through such an ordeal is surely better. But if the result would be suffering for the remainder of life, perhaps consider that death is surely more desirable than prolonged suffering. We must not fear what will happen when we are absent;

if we have left our wishes in the hands of those we trust to carry those wishes out, what more can be asked? There is no greater act of love and nobility than carrying out the legacy of another.

Extending life beyond its natural intent is likewise undesirable. Old age is the decline of the body, and we accept that far more readily than we accept death—but why? It is there so that we don't forget the urgency of acting when action is necessary. When things are left undone, it is often because we hurried at the end of life to do them—or that we were interrupted by death unexpectedly. This is natural and even desirable. It reminds the rest of us that now is the time we must act.

Many authors have been interrupted from their next big project's completion by death. Many great thinkers have died without completing their life's work. We must accept that death is inevitable, and that we do not know what fate, destiny, or choice are beyond the grave—thus, why grieve the unknown? We must instead live in the moment, and make life all that it can be in the here-and-now. To do any less we would cease being the Jedi, and would start being something else.

All we can offer to those who feel the loss of a connection is our companionship, an explanation of our beliefs (if warranted), and compassion. The feeling of loss is a self-imposed delusion, unless we honestly believe that death is an end and a complete cessation. This does not make life any less certain to end in death.

We don't need to preach; we must simply accept that another is grieving, and do what we can do in order to ease suffering while they go through their own process. Simply offering support and companionship is sometimes enough. Even if someone would rather be alone, the offer is usually appreciated—it shows that other connections remain, even if one feels lost.

Lives which end without offspring are the most tragic of all. There will be no one to carry the genetics which led someone to be great or bad.

> *"It is said that the leaf honors the tree; yet when the leaf falls, the tree trembles."*

—Master Po, "Kung Fu," Episode: "Dark Angel"

Question: Do Jedi Believe in Reincarnation?

We simply cannot know what occurs after death until after we die. A Jedi recognizes this fact, and remains open to the possibilities. Reincarnation is one of these possibilities, and is certainly something that there is limited evidence to support. Most Jedi do believe in some form of reincarnation. However, it is not a primary tenet of Jedi belief, and is not required for the practice of Jediism.

Question: Do Jedi Believe in Life After Death?

Again, we simply can't know what happens after we die. A Jedi doesn't discount the possibility (there is ample evidence to suggest that the spirit lives on), but doesn't blindly accept the idea either. This is one of those beliefs which is not primary to the belief of Jediism, although it is strongly believed by most Jedi.

Skepticism and belief can both be held to blindly; neither is rational without solid evidence. Therefore, a Jedi's mind remains open to what might be, rather than solidly embracing what might not be. But hope is always held that one or the other remains so.

Question: Do Jedi Suppress Their Negative Emotions?

Quite the contrary: a Jedi tends to feel some things often more intensely than others. However, part of the Jedi training regiment allows a Jedi to acknowledge their emotions and to move on.

Emotion; yet peace.

Emotions are necessary for good mental and physical health. Often, emotions are the guide for correct action, and so by extending one's awareness of what one feels (called "emotional intelligence") a Jedi can perceive things about people and situations which may not be apparent to other people.

Even so, a Jedi works not to suppress emotions, but to create a means by which to act in spite of them, rather than because of them. In the films, Anakin

Skywalker became enamored with Padme Amidala, and through his overwhelming love for her, he was corrupted by Darth Sidious (Senator, and later Emperor, Palpatine), so that he could save her life. But soon after he gave himself over to the Dark Side, his lust for power overtook his love, because Padme didn't want ochlocracy or despotism—she wanted a democracy, and was in fact acting in an egalitarian capacity to try to bring Anakin back from the Dark Side.

Anakin's selfish desire to save Padme was not based on Padme's well-being, but in his own fear of being without her. And because of his choices, Padme's death was assured.

Emotional controls are unacceptable for someone who is trained as a weapon. A Jedi's aim is to be able to act, think, and believe freely—as well as to freely refrain from action, thought, or belief.

Question: Why do Jedi Study Martial Arts?

Put simply: it's a dangerous world out there. If we are to protect and defend the innocent and promote the idea of peace, we must cultivate the warrior part of our souls. If someone threatens us, the knowledge that we can defeat them is enough for us to want to seek other ways—experience teaches us that violent action simply isn't the way to do things, and gives us alternatives. When we don't know, we are tempted to prove our abilities to ourselves. By knowing and understanding violence, we wish for peace.

And in wishing for peace while being prepared for combat, we seek peaceful resolution.

> *"In a heart that is one with nature, though the body contends, there is no violence. And in the heart that is not one with nature, though the body be at rest, there is always violence. Be, therefore, like the bow of a boat: it cleaves the water, yet it leaves in its wake water unbroken."*

—Master Po "Kung Fu" Episode: "Dark Angel"

Question: When Does Life Begin?

It is difficult to say when life begins. There is a portion of Jedi society which believes that the moment of conception is when life begins; another portion doesn't believe that life begins until the fetus is capable of surviving outside of the body—about 30 weeks into a pregnancy. A few even say that in order to be alive, the baby must be born. There is no consensus among the Jedi, except that we all believe that a newborn infant is alive and worthy at that point of protection under the law.

A child whose incurable condition is suffering should be permitted to die. This is a painful decision for any parent, but an end to suffering is not something to mourn. Conversely, a child whose condition is curable should not be simply permitted to die if medical or technological cures can alleviate the suffering which they endure. If and when these fail, death's embrace should come to end suffering. There

is no greater loss for any parent than their own child, and no greater comfort for this loss than the knowledge that the death was the end to suffering. Even so, such comfort is small when compared to the loss of a life which came from your own.

Truly, life begins when we start living it for ourselves. Those robbed of the opportunity to fully live die a death which can only be described as tragic. And who among us knows how to fully live, until we realize that life may be taken from us? It is less important to define when life begins than it is to end suffering.

> *"The thorn defends the rose: it harms only those who would steal the blossom from the plant."*
>
> —*Master Kahn "Kung Fu" Episode: "An Eye for an Eye"*

Question: Why do Jedi People Say "May the Force Be With You"?

The Force is always with us. It is a Jedi belief that the Force cannot abandon us. And yet, when we feel at our most disconnected, we might find an amount of internal noise which makes us deaf to it. This phrase is a wish for success in one's goals, and for inner peace during any time of outer turmoil.

> *"May the Force be with you."*

This sentiment is also occasionally expressed as:

"The Force will be with you—always."

We use these phrases to identify one another, as well as to pay homage to the films, as well as wishing one another well. Online, these are often abbreviated as MTFBWY and TFWBWYA, respectively.

Question: What is dogma? Why do Jedi say it's bad?

Dogma is an unbreakable rule which is based on an underlying principle. Generally, dogmas are created by people, and so aren't really the underlying principle. To understand principles, we must directly experience them in action. Within Jediism, there is a dogma of "no dogmas allowed," and so people are constantly fighting against them, even when they are useful to alleviate the suffering of others.

Question: What Kind of "Education" Leads to Rehabilitation?

In all cases of successful rehabilitation, the unvarnished truth—ugly or beautiful as it may be—yields positive results, and can actually allow for social change. Take the issue of homosexuality: in the 1950's in the United States, if two men were found to be having sex, one or both might be imprisoned for sodomy. In the 1950's, "rehabilitation" of someone who was criminally homosexual could not have

occurred[7]. Had there been Jedi in that time, they would have been able to recognize this fact.

Laws which govern what consenting adults do are difficult to enforce behind closed doors, but just imagine what would happen if the government was allowed to watch heterosexual people having sex, to determine that only proscribed positions were used and that it was *only* done for the purpose of procreation. Likewise, those who are homosexual are not truly causing harm to anyone by the fact of their homosexuality, and willing partners are not consenting to being harmed. Instead, such laws serve to sow distrust in the government by the population—rather than protection of good acts, the promotion of unnatural deviation is created. Thus, the intent of the law in such cases may be noble, but the law itself is counterproductive and therefore evil.

In 2004, the US Supreme Court determined that laws which proscribe sexuality, and those which re-

[7] It's fairly clear that most homosexuals have no choice but to be homosexual, so "rehabilitation" of someone who is homosexual isn't really possible. Those who have a choice are possibly bisexual, or merely trying to be trendy or gain attention because of their perceived condition. In any case, a change in the perception of homosexuality has occurred and is still occurring in the US. In Sweden, the change is far more progressed than most places, because of the willingness to accept that certain things have a natural order. Swedish culture tends to be far more accepting of things which simply exist as a natural byproduct—however personally distasteful it might be to the individual—and move ahead with life as normal. By giving it nothing to resist, homosexuality is far less prevalent in Sweden than in the United States.

quire that only certain kinds of sexual intercourse were accepted practice between consenting adults, were an invasion of privacy and unenforceable. The fact that people are opposed to homosexuality is not a concern which the law should take a position on unless significant harm is readily apparent; society itself should govern the way that society behaves; the law is merely an intermediary to lay down the expectations in which such behavior can be understood. It is a social contract. Criminal acts are not those which seek to carry out one's nature; but which instead seek to harm all of society. As a prime example, homosexuality in the United States has become a protected act, because there are enough people in the practice of it. It does no one harm but those who are not truly homosexual who might be forced or coerced into the act of sexuality without real consent; and such is already illegal by the virtue of the act not being consensual. Adding a new law is simple; removing a law, once added, is very nearly impossible.

Some criminals simply are not able to be rehabilitated; others are able to be, and merely need a good foundation in logic to see their misdeeds. However, if logic shows that they are justified in their actions, a Jedi can call this a success, because there was no need to begin with. This is the reason that propagandizing the educational process is to be avoided at all costs: it prevents a peaceful and orderly society. It creates the opportunity to assign blame.

Assigning blame serves only to make one seem less than another; rather, a Jedi seeks to accept rightful responsibility for what is theirs, and to hold blameless the actions of others—often, they know no better, or would not act the way they do. We must each learn to withhold judgment, and instead to render assistance where we see it is needed. We must also learn to accept what is offered when we need it, in the spirit in which it was offered—for the joy we feel in helping others is one we don't want withhold!

> *"Failure is an opportunity: if you blame someone else, there is no end to the blame."*

—Lao Tzu, "Tao te Ching"

Question: Can Jedi See the Future?

Not as such. A fully-trained Jedi can see many of the possibilities of the future, and can even predict many of those possibilities. They aren't all set in stone—though there are a few which do seem to be unavoidable. The problem is, we don't have the means to tell them apart. One future event looks like another, and it's merely a matter of calculating possibilities at that point (and such calculations can be wrong). In addition, it doesn't work the way that Hollywood tends to make it seem.

Ignorance, yet knowledge: A Jedi doesn't "see" the future. A Jedi knows, and can have impressions about, and can even describe some things at a distance; but actual visions of the future… it's just not

really the way that it works. Fully-formed visions are almost always considered wrong when they occur.

> *"Difficult to see: always in motion is the future."*
>
> *—Master Yoda, Ep. V "The Empire Strikes Back"*

Question: Do Jedi Believe in Democracy?

All Jedi believe in freedom—the freedom of the mind, the freedom of individuals to make both good and bad choices, and the freedom to reap the consequences of those actions. Democracy (at the present time) seems to be the best way to protect those freedoms, but a true democracy educates its people about things like personal responsibility and initiative.

Laws are kept simple, direct, and few in number, where freedom is the rule. Where freedom is not the rule—where selfish and evil designs against the freedom of others to enjoy their lives has taken root—the laws gradually increase until they are so many in number and so indirect and complex that one person can no longer understand them, or they are corrupted to the interests of a specific group above others, serving the interests of money and power over those of the protection and well-being of the citizens under its rule. People would want this because those in power are able to

But those who have power do not easily relinquish it. Rules and laws become oppressive as control and order are imposed on others. And as these laws are passed, power passes from the hands of the people into the hands of those in more direct control of the government. The duty of government is to serve the best interests of the people. But where the words "best interests" are not well-defined, are unclear, or are in dispute, government should seek to understand why citizens believe that things are not well-served by the enactment of a proposed law.

And where the facts are misconstrued or are incorrect, or even where the decision is a difficult one, government officials often feels pressure to pass laws that they later regret. In such cases, it is better to prevent new laws rather than to take power and responsibility from the population. But populations must also be educated as to why such a decision is needed. But where a government seeks to propagandize by skewing the facts or outright lying to their citizens, that government loses the trust of the people. Where officials seek to justify their campaigns through funding which all but guarantees that oversight is lacking, the people lose faith that the system works. And where money determines whether or not actions are justified, justice cannot prevail.

Such a system breeds rebellion in its wake, and lays the foundation for its own downfall—civil war. Rebellion can be crushed for only so long before it succeeds, and if such a rebellion is to succeed, the only thing that is required is that it obtains solid financial

backing, good strategic intelligence and training, and a moral high ground. And when it does finally succeed, the rebellion is serving to preserve the freedoms of the people, not merely to topple order.

But in creating a new governing body, the Jedi tend to be democratic in nature, even if not completely egalitarian. There is no religious requirement for democracy, but it does offer the greatest capacity for both personal freedom and law. The main drawback to democracy is that decisive action is often difficult or even impossible to accomplish without an agreement to grant powers to a central authority—and this begins the downfall to democratic rule. But as governments go, this is the best form that is currently known, and its benefits do tend to outweigh its drawbacks.

"My allegiance is to the Republic! For democracy!"

—Obi-Wan Kenobi, Ep. III "Revenge of the Sith"

Question: Are Those Who Follow the Jedi Way Actually in a Cult?

The world *cult* as defined by Dictionary.com is complex. But let's focus on the ones which are important to the definitions in which people usually intend the word:

1. *A religion or religious sect generally considered to be extremist or false, with its followers often living in an*

unconventional manner under the guidance of an authoritarian, charismatic leader.

2. *The followers of such a religion or sect.*

3. *Obsessive, especially faddish, devotion to or veneration for a person, principle, or thing.*

4. *The object of such devotion*

Origin: 1610–20; < L *cultus* habitation, tilling, refinement, worship, equivalent to *cul-*, var. s. of *colere* to inhabit, till, worship + *-tus* suffix of v. action

The word itself is from worship which was heretical in nature in the early European Renaissance, near the end of the Burning Crusade. A cult is generally held to be definition #1 (above), but any minority religious group can be considered a cult. In 300 AD, Christianity was a cult. In modern days, Mormonism, Scientology, and even the Quakers are considered cults by one group or another, to the point that the term really loses all scope of meaning. But what people mean to ask is: *is it dangerous, or full of people with beliefs that cause harm to others?*

People have always considered ideas and attitudes different than their own dangerous and even harmful. The ideas of the Jedi belief are not inconsistent with Buddhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Taoism, Judaism, or even mainstream Islam. In fact, the Jedi belief is that if one practices as a Jedi, this doesn't negate all religious need, and other religious preferences may be practiced along with the Jedi philosophies. But where other religions are stricter, Jedi beliefs are fairly unrestrictive, focusing on the natural consequences over spiritual consequences (though not failing to take such spiritual consequences into account, where they can be demonstrated or experienced).

But those who practice the Jedi beliefs do so because it makes sense to them to do so. Most people who become Jedi discover that they have always been Jedi, as they hold the values of the Jedi Order in a way which is deeply personal: honor, respect, integrity, and reliability come as second-nature to these people (not all of them all the time, but as a generalized rule). We don't demand money, we aren't extremists, we don't generally talk a lot about weapons, and as leadership goes there isn't really a specific centralized authority—the authority is the Force, and thus truth. The people in authority over the religious groups are actually in service to them, and may not demand more than people are willing to give.

In addition, we don't have any particular requirement for diet (other than those which are required for good health), no particular medical handling re-

quirements (other than as medicine itself demands), and no particular activity restrictions (other than what is required for good health benefits). There is no requirement for *asceticism.*[8] What we do restrict is a small list:

1. Attachment to any person is discouraged.
2. Disrespect of other people is strongly discouraged.
3. Attachment to status is forbidden (the titles themselves are conferred without choice at times).
4. Attachment to material possessions is forbidden (ownership is not forbidden, but addictions are).
5. Reverence for all life and its connection to us is required.
6. Detachment from any concept of absolutes is required.

We do have some days of reverence which should be considered days off from work, and which vary from tradition to tradition—the anniversaries are in dispute.

[8] This means restraining mind, body, and speech in a way which is in line with spiritual goals. Most Jedi accept that these are dogmatic, created by people instead of divinity, and thus such refrain is meaningless to someone who isn't spiritual and a natural habit to those who attain enlightenment at a certain level.

And really, we don't believe in Jedi having mental powers like the movies any more than the Shaolin monks believe in people running across the outstretched limbs of bamboo leaves without really disturbing them. We don't build lightsabers and we don't generally smile on people who make us look like complete morons. But what we do believe in is an invisible energy field which we call the Force, which is in every living thing, and which is both the cause and effect of life.

This book also attempts to dissuade those who believe the Jedi way to be a cult, though the reader is free to infer whatever is desired. Everyone's entitled to their opinions: we may yet be a cult on someone's list, or we might actually be a real religion. It's a subjective answer, really, and it all depends upon one's point of view.

Question: How do I Tell if Someone is a Sith?

There is a tradition of the Sith which is created as a response to the Jedi. The issue is that Jedi and Sith don't actually war the way they do in the motion pictures; rather, they do battle with philosophy. These people actually are generally anti-religionists—atheists who want to try to dismantle anything resembling an organized religion. Some cite the portions of history in which religious truths were twisted into something other than what they were intended to be, where people acted in the name of a metaphysical entity which the clergy was said to un-

derstand, and which the average person was not allowed access to.

The Sith themselves embrace the antithesis of the Jedi beliefs, within the same framework. They are necessary to keep the Jedi in balance and honest. To eliminate one side or the other would be to unbalance the Force, and in the films this was embodied by Darth Vader, who facilitated the betrayal and murder of the Jedi because they were out of balance. The lesson was that even with the best intentions, power is not easily relinquished.

While the Sith have every right to believe as they will, and their beliefs have every bit as much validity for them as ours do for us, they are not the same as Jedi (despite what many Jedi claim). Many choose the title "Sith Lord" for its shock value; some use it simply to thumb their noses at authority (including any self-styled Jedi religious authorities); and others still use it because they truly believe that the Sith side of the Force should advance.

The Sith path is seductive, because it is an easy path to take: selfish, greedy, and opportunistic, without high regard for other people (with a "what have they ever done for you?" attitude). Not all Dark Side activity is evil, nor are all evil activities on the Dark Side. This is a difficult concept to explain, and very difficult to understand even with an adequate explanation.

We Jedi don't accept that things are absolute, because what is considered selfish and evil under one set of circumstances might well be selfless under another.

No one can know the true intent but the person acting—and even then, they don't always realize it. We don't consider the Sith evil: we mutually believe one another to be misguided. There are no massive battles or swordfights or even real animosity; both are required for balance. Even if we considered the Sith evil, our place is in resisting such within ourselves, not in changing everyone else's minds.

About the Authors

The authors prefer anonymity, since it would only serve to glorify themselves and this would not serve the community well.

The Jedi School was founded in late 2009 by a group of dedicated individuals who sought to free the Jedi community from the dogmatic approach of templar Jediism. The founding concept was to create a place of study in which all religious ideals could be explored and developed in the same way that other ideas are developed: by creating a religious venue that offers no leverage of power over those who practice (except during necessary parts of initial education), the Jedi School seeks to change the former concept of the authoritarian religious model and create a living, growing, and flourishing awareness of the universe as it truly is—which is nothing short of startling for most.

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